

## Attending the Gynaecology Rapid Access One Stop Postmenopausal Bleeding Clinic

You have been referred to this clinic by your GP because you have one of the following problems: bleeding following the menopause; abnormal bleeding whilst on HRT; or an abnormality on a pelvic ultrasound scan.

The purpose of the clinic is to identify the cause of your problem and plan the necessary treatment. We appreciate the anxiety that problems like yours can cause so we aim to make an appointment for you as quickly as possible after receiving the referral from your General Practitioner (GP).

### **Before the visit**

- We encourage you to bring someone with you to the appointment who can drive you home afterwards, in case you feel dizzy after. They may be able to come in with you (depending on current situation) to see the doctor.
- We suggest you wear a loose-fitting skirt to avoid removing all your lower clothing during the examination, or bring a dressing gown. A hospital cover will be available if you need.
- You may experience some spotting or fresh blood after the procedure so please bring a sanitary pad with you. One will be provided if needed.
- *We strongly suggest you take pain relief (i.e. Paracetamol or Ibuprofen) half an hour before your appointment time to help minimise any discomfort*
- You should allow at least an hour for this visit, but the exact time will depend on which investigations are needed.
- Do not be frightened by this leaflet! Although it may sound daunting reading about all the possibilities everything that happens will be carefully explained to you step by step in the clinic. Remember, you will always be in control and nothing will be done without your consent.

### **The Clinic Visit**

- You will be asked about your medical history (including any tablets you are on) and your symptoms. It is important you tell the doctor if you are allergic to any drug or latex. The type of investigations undertaken will vary from person to person depending on the underlying problem. You will have this explained to you by the doctor and an opportunity to ask questions. You will be asked to sign a consent form to cover all eventualities before going through to the treatment room.
- You will then go through to a slightly darkened examination room, where you will be made comfortable on a special couch. A nurse will be present throughout to assist you as much as you need. The procedures needed may include:-
  - **Abdominal examination**
  - **Vaginal and Speculum examination** (like a smear test)
  - **Colposcopy** (examining the cervix with a bright light and displaying a

picture of it on a TV screen that you can see if you wish)

- **Vaginal ultrasound scan** (inserting a narrow probe into the vagina to scan the womb and ovaries without the need for a full bladder)
- **Hysteroscopy**  
This involves looking into the womb using a thin telescope only a few millimetres wide put through the cervix. A local anaesthetic will be used if needed. Some people experience cramping period type pains when this is done but it is extremely variable (*mild to severe*) and will pass quickly. The procedure can be stopped at any time if it is too uncomfortable for you.
- **Endometrial biopsy or removal of polyps**  
If it is felt necessary a small sample of tissue (biopsy) will be taken from the lining of the womb. Occasionally, small polyps are noted within the cavity of your womb and it may be that these are the cause of your bleeding. It is often possible to remove small polyps during the hysteroscopy but larger polyps will require removal at a later date and this will be explained fully to you if it is the case.

### **What happens afterwards?**

- After the procedure we will discuss any findings and the next step in your treatment. Once this has been done you will usually feel ready to go home within half an hour. If you are feeling unwell then let the receptionist know and the nurses will check you before you go.
- You will need to take it easy for the rest of the day. If you have abdominal aching then you can take further painkillers or use a hot water bottle when you get home.
- If a smear or biopsy has been taken, we will notify you and your GP of the results and any changes to your plan of care in about three-four weeks.
- If you have heavy bleeding or develop increased pain or offensive vaginal discharge in the days following the procedure this could be a sign of infection and you should seek advice from your GP in the first instance. Alternatively you may contact:

<p>Lily clinic, treatment Centre <b>Hinchingbrooke Hospital</b> Huntingdon, PE29 6NT</p> <p>Opening hours may vary</p> <p>01480 363925</p>	<p>The Emergency Gynaecology Assessment Unit (EGAU) 1<sup>st</sup> floor, woman and child unit, Bretton Gate <b>Peterborough (City Hospital)</b> PE3 9GZ</p> <p>Open: Weekdays 0800-1800-phone line open until 1730 Weekends/Bank holidays 0800-1200 01733 673758 (voicemail will cut in when the line is engaged – please leave a message for a call back).</p>
<p>For emergencies only, out of these hours, please attend the Emergency Department</p>	

Within this leaflet we use the term woman/women, however we acknowledge that it is not only people who identify as women for whom it is necessary to access our services. We recognise the importance of providing inclusive and respectful care to all people and their families, including those whose gender identity does not align with the sex they were assigned at birth. Please let us know if there is anything we can do to make you feel more comfortable while you are under our care