

# Colposcopy

## *What is Colposcopy?*

Colposcopy is a way of looking at the cervix, vagina and vulva through a special magnifying device called a colposcope. A colposcope can greatly enlarge the normal view. This exam allows an obstetrician-gynecologist (ob-gyn) to find problems that cannot be seen by the eye alone.

This pamphlet explains

- Reasons for colposcopy
- How Colposcopy is done
- What to expect before, during and after the procedure

## *Reasons for Colposcopy*

Colposcopy is done when results of cervical cancer screening tests show abnormal changes in the cells of the cervix. Colposcopy provides more information about the abnormal cells. Colposcopy may also be done if you have certain types of human papillomavirus (HPV) infection.

Colposcopy can be used to further assess other problems, including

- Itching, burning, or abnormal skin on the vulva (possible signs of cell changes that can lead to cancer)
- Genital warts
- Cervicitis (an inflamed cervix)
- Benign (not cancer) growths such as polyps
- Pain
- Bleeding

Sometimes colposcopy may need to be done more than once. It can also be used to check the results of a treatment.

Source: [The American College of Obstetrics and Gynecologists](#)