

**Women and Children's Division
Patient Information**

Postmenopausal Bleeding (PMB)
For 2 STOP appointments



Your GP has referred you to the PMB clinic for which you will receive 2 separate appointments.

This leaflet gives you information about your appointments and the tests which you may have during your visit.

Telephone: 01743 261663

2 Week Wait Urgent appointments

What is postmenopausal bleeding?

Postmenopausal bleeding (PMB) is vaginal bleeding that happens at least 12 months after your periods have stopped.

Why have I been sent to the PMB clinic?

Any vaginal bleeding or brown vaginal discharge which happens after a year since the last period should be looked into. In only a small number of cases there may be a serious cause for the bleeding, such as endometrial cancer (cancer of the lining of the uterus).

The purpose of your visit to the clinic is to let us to do some tests to try to find out what has caused your bleeding.

What happens during these appointments?

1st appointment -

- You will have an ultrasound scan. First you will have a scan with the probe placed on your tummy. 90 minutes before your appointment go for a pee then have a drink and do not go to the toilet again before your appointment. After the scan of your tummy, a small probe, will be gently put into your vagina so that your uterus (womb) can be seen. This is not normally uncomfortable.

2nd appointment –

- The results of your ultrasound scan will be reviewed by a doctor. If the doctor feels that you do not need any further tests they will call you to tell you that you will be discharged back to the care of your GP.
- After you have had the scan, you may be sent an appointment to be seen by a doctor in the gynaecology clinic. We aim to invite you for your second appointment as soon as possible after your first appointment.
- During the appointment, you will be asked a few questions and have the results of the scan explained. The doctor or nurse specialist might also do an internal (inside) examination and a test called 'pipelle biopsy'. You may also be offered a hysteroscopy which is described below, information will be given to you about this test.

What is pipelle biopsy?

This is a biopsy (sample of tissue) of the lining of the uterus. A speculum (which is the same device used in cervical screening tests) is put into the vagina and a small thin plastic tube is passed through the neck of the womb (cervix) into the uterus (womb). The biopsy is then sent for testing. You can expect some light bleeding for the next few days.

Will it be painful?

You might feel some period-like pains during and after the test. We suggest you take simple painkillers such as paracetamol at least one hour before the appointment. What are the benefits of having this test?

This test is a quick and simple way of taking a biopsy from the lining of the uterus. You do not need time off work after having this test.

What are the risks with this test?

- Period-like cramping pains.
- Bleeding. You might have a small amount of bleeding after the test but this usually settles after a few hours.
- Sometimes a woman feels dizzy and unwell, due to a drop in her blood pressure, but this passes quickly.
- Sometimes the cervix is too tight, or the woman finds the test too uncomfortable for the biopsy to be taken. If this happens the doctor or nurse will explain to you the next steps.

Will I need any further tests?

Depending on the results from the scan, the doctor or nurse may suggest another test called 'hysteroscopy'. This would be the case, if the scan showed the lining of the uterus was getting thicker or anything unusual inside the uterus.

Hysteroscopy is usually done as an outpatient (clinic) appointment under local anaesthetic (awake) but sometimes general anaesthetic (asleep) is needed.

A fine tube with a camera is passed along the vagina, through the cervix into the uterus. The womb is gently made bigger using fluid to get a good view. Fine instruments can be passed through the tube to take a biopsy or remove polyps (polyps are like a skin tag but inside the uterus) if needed.

How do I get the results of the biopsy?

The hospital doctor will write to you and your GP with the results of the biopsy. You will be contacted by the hospital if you need another appointment.

What if the cells are normal?

If the cells are normal and the ultrasound scan is normal, then you will need no further treatment. However, if you bleed again, you will need to ask your GP to refer you back to the hospital.

Are all patients with postmenopausal bleeding referred to the PMB clinic?

No. If your GP has already performed a scan, and depending on the findings of the scan, you may be seen first in a General Gynaecology Clinic to review your situation or be sent directly for a hysteroscopy in an Outpatient Hysteroscopy Clinic.

Sometimes women who have had a past history of breast cancer, those who are on Tamoxifen, or those with other medical history which gives them a higher risk for an abnormality of the lining of the uterus, may also be referred directly to the Hysteroscopy Clinic.

If you have any concerns or any further questions, please ask one of the Gynaecology nurses or doctors. You can contact the Gynaecology Ward on 01952 565914.

Other sources of information

NHS Choices has been developed to help you make choices about your health, from lifestyle decisions about things like smoking, drinking and exercise, through to the practical aspects of finding and using NHS services when you need them. www.nhs.uk

Patient UK

Evidence based information on a wide range of medical and health topics.

www.patient.co.uk

Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)

PALS will act on your behalf when handling patient and family concerns; they can also help you get support from other local or national agencies. PALS is a confidential service.

Royal Shrewsbury Hospital, Tel: 0800 783 0057 or 01743 261691

Princess Royal Hospital, Tel: 01952 282888

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