



Dilation and Curettage (D & C)

Before the Operation

You may require blood test or other investigations before your operation. You will be advised by your surgeon, as to when to stop eating and drinking. You will be admitted and prepared for your stay by one of the Nursing Staff. In most cases you need only stay as a day case. You will be advised if you need to stay longer. This would normally occur if your surgery is later or you have medical problems.

During your Operation

A D. and C. is a very quick operation, which takes about ten to fifteen minutes. Once you are anaesthetised the Doctor inserts a speculum into your vagina (the same used for a smear). The neck of the womb (cervix) is gently opened (dilated) to a few millimetres. The lining is then removed by means of gently scraping with a spoon like instrument called a curette.

After the Operation

You will wake up in the recovery room and you stay there for about half an hour so the nurses can keep a check on you. Back on the ward regular observations will be taken as well as your blood pressure and pulse. You will be able to drink and then eat gradually.

It is usual to have some slight, bleeding, bright red blood at first, which gradually becomes brown in the course of a week to ten days. If this should become heavier (than a normal period) or seems smelly, you

should contact the ward, your Consultant or your GP, as this could be a sign of infection. If you feel generally unwell and have a high temperature you should call, as this could also be a sign of infection. Following a D and C you may find that your next period (if you still have them) is a bit heavier, and between three and six weeks. Your cycle should soon settle to your normal pattern. Many women find that they have slight, crampy, period type pains for a day or so. Taking a mild painkiller such as Paracetamol or ibuprofen can help this.

Things to avoid after the Operation

It is best to use sanitary towels rather than tampons until your next period to help avoid infection.

It is better to shower rather than bath for a few days and avoid using bubble bath or heavily scented soap as this may irritate your vagina. As the neck of the womb has been opened you should avoid having sexual intercourse for one week or until the bleeding has stopped. If possible stay off work, for a few days to rest. Most women find they are able to return to their usual activities within seventy-two hours. If you have to take time off work your Consultant's secretary can give you a sickness certificate.

You should not drive for 48 hours, as your concentration could be impaired. You need to arrange for someone to collect you.

Your Consultant will inform you of any out patient appointments required.

Contact

If you have any queries you can contact the ward on 020 7390 8180/02 or your Consultant's secretary, Monday to Friday between 9am and 5pm.

Disclaimer

Whilst this leaflet aims to provide you with useful information and advice it must be noted that it should only act as a guideline. The procedure may effect patients differently and therefore if you find that you deviate from the information given on the leaflet it is advisable that you consult your Consultant.

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