

Hysteroscopy, Dilatation&Curettage (D&C)

This is a very common gynaecological procedure which I perform in the operating theatre usually under general anaesthetic as a “day procedure”.

It involves inserting a camera into the uterus through the vagina and cervix. This allows inspecting the endometrial cavity and lining (inside of the uterus) for presence of abnormal masses, fibroids, polyps, suspicious structures and shape of the cavity.

Sometimes depending on the circumstances and my discussion preoperatively these can and are removed during the procedure. In any case a sample of the uterine lining (endometrium) is usually obtained for pathological examination in laboratory after the operation. This allows abnormalities of the lining to be determined.

Although this is a very common and safe gynaecological procedure potential risks do exist.

Infection and more than minimal “normal” bleeding could occur.

A more substantial risk of perforating the uterine wall is uncommon and is usually not serious. In very rare circumstances perforation of the uterus can result in trauma to vital structures such as bowel or large blood vessels.

No or minimal pain is experienced afterwards, however some spotting or even light bleeding is to be expected. This generally settles within days.

PLEASE REPORT:

SIGNIFICANT PAIN REQUIRING MORE THAN SIMPLE PARACETAMOL OR
ANTIINFLAMMATORY ANALGESIA;

ANY BLEEDING THAT IS GETTING HEAVIER, INVOLVES CHANGING A PAD MORE THAN EVERY
HOUR OR DEVELOPS AN OFFENSIVE ODOUR.

The patient goes home several hours after the procedure and can resume normal activity and function the next day. Intercourse and tampon insertion needs to be postponed till any vaginal bleeding stops.

In general I would review the patient in my office in 1 week to discuss the final results and outline further management of the underlying condition.

It is important to understand that most of the time this procedure is not curative of the underlying problem (unless a polyp for example was removed). Most often this procedure is diagnostic (akin to having an X-ray or blood test for example) and is thus simply an information gathering exercise to decide on optimal treatment afterwards.