

## **Endometrial Biopsy and Cervical Dilation**

### **What is an endometrial biopsy?**

An endometrial biopsy is a procedure that obtains a sample of the lining of the uterus, it is called the “endometrium”. The endometrium is shed on a cyclic basis (a “period”) during a woman’s menstrual cycle. In the event of pregnancy the endometrium provides a place for the fertilized egg to attach and develop. The cervix is the lower portion of the uterus or “mouth of the womb” that opens into the vagina. It provides a way into the uterus so that the biopsy can be done.

### **Why would I need this biopsy?**

There are certain clues that may tell your provider that there could be an abnormality inside your uterus. The decision to recommend such a biopsy may come from an abnormal Pap smear result, abnormal bleeding patterns, bleeding after menopause, and evaluation of infertile couples, unusual vaginal discharge or concerns for an infection. The results of this test may give your provider information on how best to treat you.

### **How is this biopsy done?**

When your healthcare provider performs such a biopsy, he or she will need to place a speculum in the vagina; the same way a pap smear is collected, in order to see the cervix. Next, a narrow, hollow instrument is passed through the opening in the cervix and into the cavity of the uterus. It is actually a long tube and about as big around as a wooden matchstick. Through this tube, the provider can remove a sample of tissue by suction, like drawing up fluid in a syringe.

### **Does this hurt?**

Generally, this procedure is very well tolerated and can be performed in the office. Most women will have some cramping like menstrual cramps. Sometimes patients are advised to take ibuprofen or another similar drug before or after the procedure in order to minimize discomfort. Occasionally, your provider will give an injection of numbing medicine (local anesthetic) into the cervix before the procedure. Another instrument may be used to grasp and hold the cervix before the biopsy is done. The procedure is usually brief and takes just a few minutes to do. You might have some mild cramping or spotting afterwards. Generally there are no restrictions after this procedure and you should be able to go about your routine normally. Your provider

**What is cervical dilation?**

The biopsy instrument needs to be passed through the opening in the cervix (the endocervical