

Diagnosing Womb Cancer - A Quick Guide



Contents

This is a brief summary of the information on 'Diagnosing womb cancer' from CancerHelp UK. You will find more detailed information on the website.

In this information there are sections on

- Womb cancer tests
- Further tests for womb cancer
- What to ask your doctor

Womb cancer tests

You will usually see your family doctor first, who will ask you about your general health and examine you. If you have symptoms that may be caused by womb cancer, your GP may ask about your family history of cancer. Your doctor may ask you to give blood and urine samples for testing. Your GP will probably then do a pelvic examination (sometimes called an 'internal'). You may also have a cervical smear.

At the hospital

If your doctor is at all concerned, he or she will ask you to go to the hospital for tests. The only way to definitely diagnose womb cancer is to take a sample of the tissue lining the womb (an endometrial biopsy). Your doctor sends the tissue to the lab,

where it is closely checked for cancerous cells, or cells that look abnormal in any way. There are different ways to take these biopsies. You might have an aspiration biopsy, a hysteroscopy, a D and C or other tests.

While you are waiting for results, it may help to talk to a close friend or relative about how you are feeling. Or you may want to contact a support group to talk to someone who has been through similar experiences.

Further tests for womb cancer

If your earlier tests show you have womb cancer, your specialist will suggest more tests to see how far the cancer has grown. The tests will also show if the cancer has spread to surrounding body tissues or to more distant parts of the body. The results will help your doctor decide on the best possible treatment for you. These further tests may include X-rays, blood tests, scans and an internal examination under general anaesthetic. This allows your doctor to examine you thoroughly and take biopsies if necessary.

After the tests

Your doctor will ask you to come back to the hospital when your test results have



come through. After the first round of tests you may need further scans such as another CT scan or MRI scan. This is to check possible cancer spread in more detail.

Many people feel anxious waiting for the results it may help to talk to a close friend or relative about how you are feeling. Or you may want to contact a cancer support group to talk to someone who has been through a similar experience.

What to ask your doctor about tests for womb cancer

- What tests are you going to do?
- What are you looking for?
- Will the tests show whether I have cancer?
- Will you know what treatment I need when you have the results?
- How urgent are the tests?
- Will any of the tests hurt?
- Do I have to have an anaesthetic for any of the tests?
- Do any of the tests have after effects?
- Can I have my tests as an outpatient?
- Can I bring someone with me when I have the tests?
- How long will the results take?
- Who will give me the test results?

More information

For more information about womb cancer, visit our website <http://cancerhelp.cancerresearchuk.org>

You will find a wide range of detailed, up to date information for people affected by cancer, including a clinical trials database that you can search for trials in the UK. You can view or print the information in a larger size if you need to.

For answers to your questions about cancer call our Cancer Information Nurses on **0808 800 4040** 9am till 5pm Monday to Friday

Adapted from Cancer Research UK's Patient Information Website CancerHelp UK in September 2011. CancerHelp UK is not designed to provide medical advice or professional services and is intended to be for educational use only. The information provided through CancerHelp UK and our nurse team is not a substitute for professional care and should not be used for diagnosing or treating a health problem or disease. If you have, or suspect you may have, a health problem you should consult your doctor. © Cancer Research UK 2011. Cancer Research UK is a registered charity in England and Wales (1089464) and in Scotland (SC041666).