

Dilatation and Curette (D&C)

GYNAECOLOGY

Operation performed

Follow-up appointment

Special instructions

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Government of **Western Australia**
Department of **Health**

Dilatation and Curette (D&C)

A D&C is an operation to lightly scrape the inside of the uterus (womb).

The cervix (neck of the uterus) is dilated using an instrument called a dilator.

The endometrium (lining of the uterus) is then scraped using a curette.

There can be a number of reasons for having a D&C procedure including for heavy periods or abnormal bleeding, after a miscarriage or to diagnose another medical problem.

Following the operation

Rest when you get home. Normal activities can usually be resumed after a day or two, although the effects of an anaesthetic may make you feel tired.

Some cramping or mild abdominal discomfort is normal after a D&C.

- You may take paracetamol, panadeine or other pain medication as ordered by your doctor.
- A hot pack may also ease the discomfort.

A small amount of bleeding (like a light period) may last for 10 to 14 days. It may become heavier with increased activity e.g. lifting.

You may:

- Use pads
- Shower as usual

For one week you should **not**:

- Swim, bath or use a spa
- Have sexual intercourse
- Use tampons

Your next period will usually begin three to six weeks after the operation. This period may be heavier than usual.

If you were using the oral contraceptive pill before the operation, continue using this as usual when you go home. Your next period will begin when you finish the packet.

Discuss contraception options with your GP.

Following a general anaesthetic

It is essential that someone stays with you from the time you go home from hospital, including overnight.

For at least **12 hours** after the general anaesthetic avoid:

- Any activity that requires the use of skill or judgement e.g. cooking, making hot drinks, looking after young children.
- Going out socially.

For at least **24 hours** after a general anaesthetic it is recommended you avoid:

- Driving a car or operating machinery
- Drinking alcohol
- Making important decisions or signing important papers

Follow-up

It is important to visit your GP for a check up two weeks after your operation.

When to seek advice

Contact your GP or the Emergency Centre at KEMH on (08) 9340 1433 if you experience any of the following:

- Heavy bleeding that requires changing of your pad every 10 to 20 minutes.
- Passing large blood clots (larger than a 50 cent piece) or tissue.
- A fever – high temperature or chills.
- Pain in the lower part of your abdomen (tummy) that does not go away after taking the pain relieving tablets mentioned earlier.
- An offensive (smelly) discharge from your vagina.