

Patient Information Sheet on Gynaecological Examination

Tuen Mun Hospital Accident & Emergency Department

Gynaecological examination: It means examination of the female external & internal reproductive organs.

Importance:

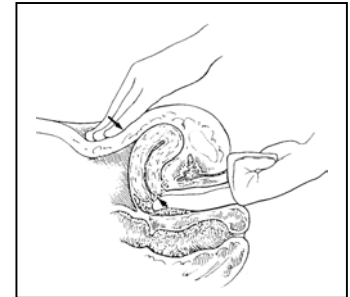
- This is commonly performed for many obstetric and gynaecological conditions, e.g. pregnancy and complications; menstrual disorders; infections, tumours or injuries of female organs etc. Vaginal swabs can be taken for laboratory examinations if indicated.
- As female organs are deeply seated in the pelvis, proper examination is crucial for making the appropriate diagnosis before management. Otherwise patient may be at risk from the underlying conditions.

Preparation:

- Healthcare worker will first explain about the examination in general and obtain your consent. Please inform the doctor in case you decline (e.g. if you are still a virgin). If such is the case, healthcare workers cannot be held fully responsible for compromised accuracy in the diagnosis.
- During the examination healthcare worker will explain to you steps of the procedure. Please seek immediate clarification if you have any query.
- You need to lie flat on bed inside the enclosed room, with both thighs spread out and lower part of the body fully undressed and exposed.

Gynaecological examination may include the following:

- Inspection: The doctor will inspect the vulva and vaginal opening for any swellings, ulcers, growths or other changes.
- Vaginal speculum: The lubricated speculum will be inserted slowly into the vagina for internal inspection of any bleeding, discharge, inflammation or other abnormalities. Swabs may be taken as indicated.
- Internal palpation: The doctor will slowly insert 1 or 2 lubricated gloved fingers into the vagina to feel for tenderness or mass inside. With the other hand feeling deep outside the abdomen, this helps to assess the internal organs, e.g. size & shape of the uterus, abnormalities of the ovaries etc.



(As in Diagram)

Risks of the procedure:

- There may be some discomfort, especially if anxiety tenses up muscles. So please relax fully, take a deep breath and then breath in and out slowly.
- Very rare are injuries from vaginal speculum, which has smooth edges. Nonetheless, full cooperation from you is needed for safety. Relax your abdominal muscles and keep your thighs widely spread open. You may request for termination of the procedure at any time just in case if excessive pain felt.
- There is no evidence that gynaecological examination will adversely affect the foetus or result in abortion. On the other hand, normal examination cannot rule out chance of subsequent natural abortion.

Follow up care: Upon discharge, please attend follow up consultation if advised. In case of deterioration in condition, please return to the Accident & Emergency Department as soon as possible.

Alternative procedure: To preserve intact hymen in virgins, rectal finger palpation may be performed instead of vaginal examination. Nevertheless it is not as helpful for arriving at correct diagnosis.

Note: Female healthcare worker will be present when male doctor performs the examination. Other healthcare workers may be present for joint consultation or training. Objection can be raised if necessary.

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