

An endometrial biopsy (EMB) is a procedure performed in your physician's office to obtain a small sample of the inside lining of the uterus (endometrium). This sample is sent to pathology for analysis to help the physician determine a diagnosis. For more information, please call our office for an appointment to discuss this procedure with a medical doctor.

Why is it done:

- An endometrial biopsy may be done to help diagnose the cause of infertility, abnormal uterine bleeding or irregular bleeding, certain abnormal pap smears and postmenopausal bleeding.
- Infertility – Throughout a woman's cycle the lining of the uterus changes under hormonal influence. During the menstrual cycle, the lining begins to grow until a mature egg is released from the ovary. If fertilization by sperm does not take place, the lining is not needed to nourish a pregnancy, and is therefore shed with a menstrual period. An endometrial biopsy helps your physician determine if the lining is going through normal menstrual cycle changes and if it can support a pregnancy.
- Abnormal uterine bleeding or irregular bleeding – Women with abnormal or irregular bleeding may need an endometrial biopsy to rule out endometrial hyperplasia or cancer.
- Certain abnormal pap smears – Women who have an AGCUS pap (Atypical Glandular Cells of Undetermined Significance) may need an endometrial biopsy to determine the cause of these abnormal cells.
- Postmenopausal bleeding – Women who have not had a period for 1 year, and are not on medications to stop their periods, are considered post-menopausal. Vaginal bleeding is not normal for these women unless they are undergoing hormone replacement therapy, which induces a period. Post-menopausal bleeding requires careful follow-up with ultrasound to assess the uterine lining. If the lining is noted to be thickened, an endometrial biopsy will be done to rule out cancer.

What can I expect if I have the procedure:

- During an endometrial biopsy, your provider will wash the cervix with an antiseptic solution. Next, a thin catheter will be inserted through the cervix into the uterine cavity. With gentle pressure, a small amount of tissue will be collected in the catheter. A mild amount of cramping may occur. The tissue will be sent to pathology for analysis and a diagnosis will be given to your physician. Further treatment will be determined by the results of your biopsy.
 - It is advised that you take Ibuprofen (Advil) or Acetaminophen (Tylenol) one hour prior to the procedure as some cramping may occur.
 - You should not have this procedure if you think you may be pregnant.
 - You should not use tampons, vaginal medications, douche, or have sexual intercourse for 48 hours prior to the procedure.
 - It is best to have this procedure immediately following your menstrual period. However, if you are spotting, the procedure can still be done.
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