



The Leeds
Teaching Hospitals
NHS Trust

Vulval clinic

Information for patients



Leeds Centre for
Women's Health

You have been referred to the vulval clinic. This leaflet contains information about the clinic which we hope you will find useful.

What is the vulval clinic?

The vulval clinic is a clinic for patients with conditions affecting the vulva, lower vagina or perineum. It is led by specialists in gynaecology who have a special interest and expertise in managing conditions of the vulva.

Why have I been referred?

The main reasons for seeing women in the vulval clinic include:

- Vulval pain
- Vulval itch symptoms
- Vulval lumps and bumps

There are a number of conditions affecting the vulva which we specialise in, these include:

- **Vulval lichen sclerosus (LS) and lichen planus (LP):** This is an inflammatory skin condition that can occur in the skin on any part of the body, including skin of the vulva and vagina. The most common symptoms are itching and soreness.
- **Vulvodynia:** This is a term used to describe the condition experienced by patients who have the sensation of vulval burning and soreness in the absence of any obvious skin condition or infection.

- Skin conditions affecting the vulva such as eczema or psoriasis.
- **Vulval intraepithelial neoplasia (known as VIN):** This is a condition affecting the vulva and skin around the anus. There may be symptoms of itch or soreness. It is not a cancer but there is a small risk of a cancer developing and it is sometimes called a vulval pre-cancer.
- **Vulva cancer:** This is rare and does not affect most women attending the vulval clinic.

What can I expect to happen at my appointment?

This will depend on the reason for the referral but may include some of the following:

- **Consultation:** This will be with the consultant or the doctors in their team. The team will need to examine your vulva and the surrounding area. It includes an internal examination, swabs or a biopsy if appropriate.
- **Vulval biopsy:** It may be necessary to take a small sample of skin (a biopsy) to examine under the microscope. Local anaesthetic is used and the procedure generally causes little discomfort.
- **Blood tests:** Blood tests may be requested following the clinic appointment.

After a biopsy

To reduce the risk of infection & promote healing:

- You should rest following the biopsy. Light exercise may continue but avoid heavy work and exercise for a few days or until the area has healed.
- You can expect some discomfort and light bleeding. Over-the-counter pain relief can be used if required (speak to the pharmacist if you need medication advice).
- No sexual intercourse for at least 2 weeks.
- You may shower as usual, and this is preferable to having baths. Keep the area dry and clean. Gently pat the affected skin dry - do not rub vigorously. Avoid any perfumed products or creams on the vulva skin.
- The stitches can take 7 to 10 days to dissolve.
- Swimming can be resumed once the stitches have dissolved and the biopsy site has healed.

If there is heavy bleeding from the biopsy site or any smelly discharge which may indicate infection, then please contact your GP or GATU (0113 2065724) as soon as possible for some medical advice.

When will I get the results

You will receive your results in up to 4-6 weeks (or as advised by your medical team). If results are not received by this time, contact the gynaecology secretaries on **0113 206 5204**.

Useful resources

Below you can find useful links to good evidence based websites, as well as leaflets about vulval care, gynaecological conditions, treatments and procedures:

- **British Society for the Study of Vulval Disease**
<https://bssvd.org/>
- **International Society for the Study of Vulvovaginal Disease**
<https://issvd.org/>
- **National Vulvodynia Association**
<https://www.nva.org/>
- **Vulval Pain Society**
<https://vulvalpainsociety.org/>

Questions / Notes

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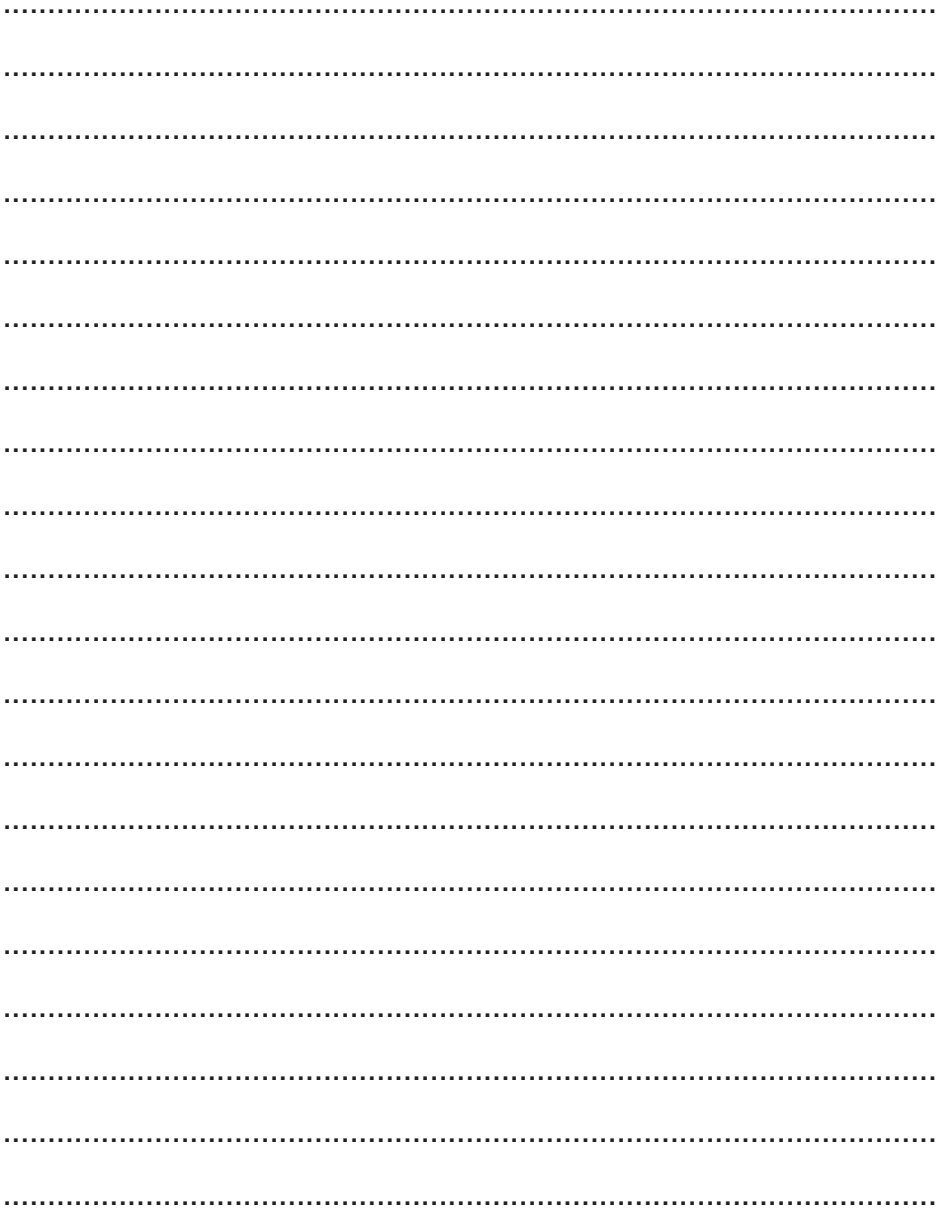
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