



Cervicitis

Definition:

Cervicitis is an inflammation and/or infection of the cervix.

Signs/Symptoms:

The signs and/or symptoms of cervicitis are quite variable. Women with cervicitis may experience vaginal discharge, occasional spot bleeding, pain with intercourse or bleeding after intercourse, or may not experience any symptoms. Most often it is noticed by the practitioner on examination. The signs are usually a cervix that bleeds easily when the Pap brush is applied, and a yellowish discharge.

Causes:

Cervicitis can be caused by bacteria such as chlamydia, gonorrhea, gardnerella, and mycoplasm; by the herpes virus or from trichomonas or candida. Specific tests can be conducted, but frequently the microbe is unidentified and will clear with treatment.

Possible Complications:

1. Abnormal Pap smears ("inflammation").
2. Pelvic inflammatory disease and possible infertility secondary to this.
3. Problems with infection in pregnancy.

Treatment:

1. If the cervicitis is considered to be bacterial, it is usually treated with an antibiotic. If the cause is the herpes virus, there is no cure, but the course can be shortened with an antiviral medication.
2. If the cause is bacterial, male partners are usually also treated with the antibiotic to prevent re-infection, though they will usually not have symptoms. It is usually recommended to avoid sexual intercourse until both partners have completed treatment.

Follow-Up:

A follow-up visit after treatment is important to ensure desired improvement.