

Auckland Sexual Health Service
Free phone 0800 739 432

What is a Biopsy?

- A biopsy means cutting out a small piece of skin from an area of concern.
- This skin is sent to a laboratory to be examined under a microscope to see if it is normal or not.
- Sometimes a biopsy does not always give a full answer as to what is wrong but usually helps your doctor in deciding what treatment is needed.

Is it Painful?

- Local anaesthetic is injected with a fine needle.
- There is an initial sting that quickly settles. After this you may feel some pressure on the skin as the biopsy is taken but that should be all.
- The numbness from the injection will last about an hour.

What happens after the Biopsy?

- Bleeding is stopped usually by applying either pressure or a substance to the area to help the blood to clot.
- Sometimes a stitch is needed.
- You will be left with a small wound which normally heals quickly within 1 – 2 weeks.
- By 6 weeks it is usually hard to tell where the biopsy has been taken from.

How do I take care of the Skin afterwards?

- Salt water baths or soaks can help with healing.
- Apply 1 handful of salt to a shallow warm bath or 1/4 teaspoon of salt to a cup of water and soak for 10 - 15 minutes, 2 - 3 times a day for 5 - 7 days.
- Avoid putting soap or talcum powder on the area while it is healing.

When can I start having sex again?

- Sex can be started once the area is comfortable to touch.