

Nabothian Cysts of the Cervix

Nabothian cysts (or Nabothian follicles) are fluid filled cysts that are benign and found often in numbers more than one on the neck of the womb (cervix). They are usually filled with gloopy mucinous material and are called retention cysts. They can be pin head in size to 1-2 cm in size and have a shiny appearance, ranging in colour from white to yellow.



These Nabothian cysts are blocked Nabothian follicles or glands that get trapped as healing of the surface of the cervix occurs, often after childbirth. These then fill with fluid and swell to a certain size as the fluid is trapped and are usually just discovered incidentally on examination.

They are generally asymptomatic and require no treatment. Less often, Nabothian cysts are related to chronic cervicitis, a long-term infection of the cervix. Rarely, if it is felt that a woman is uncomfortable because of large Nabothian cysts, is treatment needed to remove or drain the cysts under local anaesthetic.

If there is any doubt to the diagnosis, the nurse or doctor doing your examination may refer you for a colposcopy (see leaflet) to a specialist for a closer look with the help of magnification. Management will depend on the findings at colposcopy and may involve a small biopsy or diathermy (electrocautery) to treat the cysts.

Women however, in general, should be reassured that these are normal findings and do not need specialist input in most cases.

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