

# DilationandCurettage

## (D&C)

by EditorialStaffandContributors

EnEspañol(SpanishVersion)

## Definition

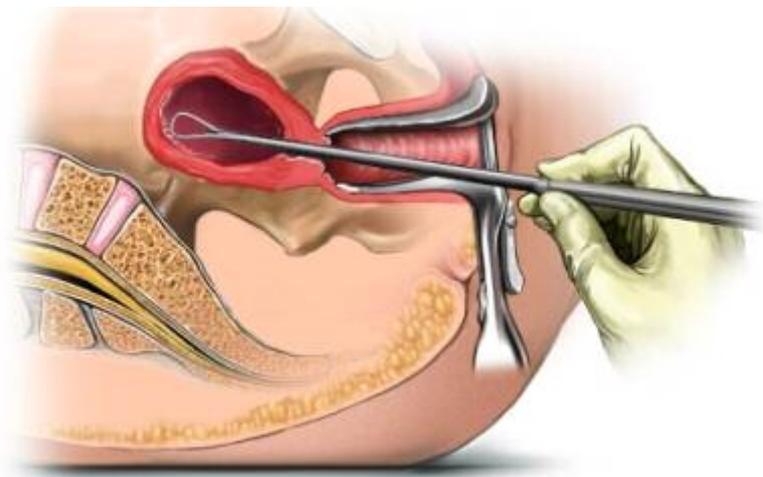
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Curettageisusedtosampletheliningoftheuterus.Theliningisknownastheendometrium.

## PartsoftheBodyInvolved

- Vagina
- Cervix
- Uterus

DilationandCurettage



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## ReasonsforProcedure

### Indications/Contraindications

- AD&Cisindicatedtodetermineconditionsthatcauseabnormalbleeding:
  - Miscarriage
  - Irregularitiesinmenstrualbleeding
  - Postmenopausalbleeding

- Endometrial polyps
- Endometrial hyperplasia
- Endometrial cancer
- AD&C is contraindicated (ie, not advised) in:
  - Infection of the uterus
  - Infection of the fallopian tubes

## Risk Factors for Complications During the Procedure

- Pre-existing infection
- Pre-existing heart or other medical condition

## What to Expect

### Prior to Procedure

In the days leading up to the procedure, arrange for a ride to and from the procedure.

### Anesthesia

- General or local anesthesia

### Description of the Procedure

A pelvic exam is done to find out the size and location of the uterus. The vagina and cervix is cleaned with an antiseptic solution. A speculum is placed in the vagina. An instrument called a cervical dilator is placed into the cervical canal. A scoop-shaped instrument, called a curette, is inserted. It is used to scrape the uterine lining and remove tissue through the vagina. After sampling the endometrium, the instrument is removed from the cervix.

### After Procedure

The tissue is evaluated in a lab.

### How Long Will it Take?

About 10 minutes

### Will it Hurt?

General anesthesia will prevent pain during the D&C. With local anesthesia, most report feeling some cramping and back pain. It may last for a day after the procedure. Over-the-counter pain medications or a mild prescription drug are all that is usually needed to relieve minor discomfort.

### Possible Complications

- Complications related to the anesthetic
- Injury to the cervix with cervical laceration
- Scarring of endometrial lining
- Infection of the uterus or fallopian tubes
- Uterine perforation (hole in the uterus) leading to possible bowel perforation or significant amount of bleeding into the uterus
- Hemorrhage that may require a blood transfusion

- Damage to bowel, omentum, mesentery, ureter, bladder, and fallopian tube
- Puncture of the uterus
- In case of significant injury or bleeding, possible need to open the abdomen and have the uterine wound sutured
- Possible need to remove the uterus ( hysterectomy )

## Average Hospital Stay

None

## Postoperative Care

After the procedure, you will be taken to the recovery area. After a short period of time you can leave.

- Plan on having an escort for transport.
- There may be some nausea from the anesthesia.
- Mild uterine cramping may be experienced. The doctor may give pain medication for this discomfort.
- It is not uncommon to experience vaginal bleeding and discharge for some time.
- Most commonly, normal activity may be started after a few days.
- Refrain from placing anything inside the vagina until instructed by the doctor because the cervix has been opened and this may allow bacteria to pass up into the uterus.
- The endometrium will build up within the next month. The next menstrual cycle may not be regular. It may be late or early.

## Outcome

It generally takes a couple of days for your doctor to receive the lab report. At your follow-up visit, your doctor will make recommendations for any additional treatment. Patients can usually return to nonstrenuous work after two or three days.

## Call Your Doctor If Any of the Following Occurs

- Fever
- Increasing abdominal pain
- Heavy vaginal bleeding (greater than a pad per hour)
- Foul smelling vaginal discharge

### RESOURCES:

The American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists  
<http://www.acog.org/>

Womenshealth.gov  
<http://www.4woman.gov/>

### CANADIAN RESOURCES:

The Society of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists of Canada  
<http://www.sogc.org/>

Women's Health Matters  
<http://www.womenshealthmatters.ca/>

## REFERENCES:

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