Cervical Screening

Photo journey for women with learning disabilities
Karen has a smear test
Karen gets a letter. It is asking her to go for cervical screening. This is sometimes called a smear test.
Karen wants to know more about having a smear test, so she looks at this booklet with a carer.
Her appointment day has come. Karen has a bath and chooses what to wear. She decides to wear a skirt.
She can choose to go to the sexual health clinic ...
... or to her doctors’ surgery.
Karen chooses the sexual health clinic.
Karen takes someone with her for support.
She asks the receptionist at the main entrance where to go.
Karen is told to follow the green signs that say …

“Contraception and Sexual Health Services”
The clinic is upstairs.
Karen takes the lift.
Karen tells the receptionist at the sexual health clinic that she is here for her appointment.
She takes a seat in the waiting room.
The nurse calls Karen and takes her to another room.
To make sure it is private the nurse shuts the door.
She talks to Karen and tells her what is going to happen. Karen can ask questions.
Karen has to take her knickers off …
… then gets on the couch.
The nurse closes the curtain round the couch for extra privacy.
The nurse washes her hands very carefully.
Karen wants her carer to be with her.
These are the things the nurse needs to do the test.
The nurse puts on special gloves.

Karen lays down, with her feet on the bed and her knees apart. The nurse puts the speculum inside Karen’s vagina. This may feel cold and uncomfortable. The nurse then puts the special small brush inside her vagina to get the cells that need to be tested.
Some cells are now on the brush. They are put in a special pot and then sent away to be looked at by an expert.
The smear test is over. Karen gets off the bed and puts her knickers back on.
The nurse says goodbye and tells Karen she will get the results of her test in a letter.
A few weeks later, Karen gets her results in the post. It says she is healthy down below. Some women may have to go back. This could be because not enough cells were collected on the brush or, because the cells need to be examined more closely. Karen doesn’t have to go back for 3 years.
If you would like this in large print, braille or on audiotape or would like this document in an alternative language, please contact the Patient Advice and Liaison Services on 01302 796813.

This information is correct at the time of publishing

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