

CERVICAL CERCLAGE

What is cervical cerclage?

Cervical cerclage is a surgical procedure used to keep the cervix closed during the pregnancy. The cervix is the lowest part of the uterus and extends into the vagina. During normal pregnancy it remains closed until the third trimester.

When is it used?

Cervical cerclage is used to prevent a miscarriage or premature delivery if you have an incompetent cervix. An incompetent cervix is a cervix that opens without labor too early in a pregnancy. Stitching around the cervix helps to keep it closed as the baby grows. The procedure may be used if you have a history of miscarriages during the middle third of pregnancy.

If you have a history of second-trimester miscarriages, a cerclage may be done at the beginning of your second trimester. Otherwise, it may be done at the time your doctor finds that your cervix is opening too early.

An alternative treatment for incompetent cervix is bed rest that may last for several months.

How do I prepare for the procedure?

Follow instructions provided by your doctor. If you are to receive a general anesthetic, eat a light meal such as soup or salad the night before the procedure. Do not eat or drink anything after midnight before the procedure. Do not even drink coffee, tea or water.

What happens during the procedure?

1. An IV will be started
2. You will be taken to the Operating Room
3. The anesthesiologist will decide on the best anesthetic for you
 - General anesthesia (being put to sleep)
 - Spinal anesthesia
 - Epidural anesthesia
4. Your legs will be placed into stirrups
5. Your perineum and vagina will be washed with surgical prep such as betadine (Please let your doctor and nurses know if you are allergic to betadine)
6. A speculum will be placed in your vagina