

Flexible Sigmoidoscopy

What is a Flexible Sigmoidoscopy?

This is a procedure in which a flexible endoscope (camera) called a colonoscope is passed through the anus (bottom) into the left side of the large bowel/intestine/colon. The colonoscope gives a clear view of the lining of the large bowel allowing the Endoscopist to make a diagnosis.

Pre procedure check list

- Bring a £1 coin for your locker (returnable).
- Bring your dressing gown and slippers with you and a book/magazine to read.
- If you choose to have sedation please arrange for someone to drive you home and stay with you overnight.
- Please bring your insulin, diabetes tablets, inhalers and heart medication with you to take after your procedure as necessary.

Preparing for the procedure

Your consultant will decide at your initial outpatient appointment what kind of bowel preparation you will require before your procedure. This will either be strong laxatives or an enema.

Laxatives: To allow us to look at the bowel you will need to follow a low fibre diet for 3 days before and take some strong laxatives.

- Please drink plenty of **clear** fluids until **two hours** before your procedure.
- Follow **medication advice** given at pre-assessment, particularly regarding anticoagulants, blood pressure medication, iron supplements, strong pain relief and diabetic medication.
- Follow the diet and **bowel preparation advice** explained to you at your pre assessment appointment.

Enema: On admission, the nurse will administer an enema.

- **If you choose to have sedation** you must stop eating 6 hours before your appointment, but **clear** fluids (no milk) can be taken until 2 hours before your procedure.
- **If you are choosing not to have sedation** you may continue eating and drinking as normal.
- If you need an interpreter telephone Endoscopy Bookings to arrange on 01733 677433.
- If you are taking any Anti-Coagulation Therapy (medicine to thin your blood) please telephone the Nursing Team on 01733 673945 or 673944.

The procedure

Once in the procedure room the flexible sigmoidoscopy will be performed while you lay on your left side, although occasionally it may be necessary for you to change position or for gentle pressure to be applied to your abdomen. The colonoscope is inserted into the back passage.

The Endoscopist may take biopsies (samples of tissue using tiny forceps), this is painless. It is also possible to remove small polyps during the procedure. Polyps are abnormal areas of tissue that need to be removed and tested in the lab. The Endoscopist may advise a full colonoscopy. It will be requested to happen on a different day.

A flexible sigmoidoscopy usually lasts up to 20 minutes.

Please be aware on the day of your flexible sigmoidoscopy you may be in the unit for up to four hours.

After the procedure

You will be taken from the treatment room to the recovery area where you will rest on the trolley. After approximately 30 minutes you will be taken to the discharge area to get dressed, have a drink and something to eat. You may feel a little bloated.

You may use your mobile in the discharge area or the nurse can contact your lift when you are ready.

If you require an outpatient appointment this will be sent by post, please inform us if you have a pre-booked one.

Possible complications

All procedures of this nature carry a small risk of bleeding or perforation to the mucosal lining.

- Risk of perforation 1 in 1000.
- All therapeutic procedures increase the risk of perforation e.g. dilation/polypectomy.
- If a perforation (a hole in the bowel wall) does occur you may need a blood transfusion or a surgical operation.
- Due to the anatomy of the bowel lining there is a small chance we may miss small lesions.

Sedation or Entonox?

You may choose to have Entonox (gas and air) and/or sedation during the procedure to help with any discomfort.

Entonox: Rapid onset pain relief with minimal side effects, self-administered under our supervision and the effect disappears rapidly. You are able to drive within 30 minutes after use.

Sedation: This relaxes you but does not put you to sleep. It stays in your system for up to 24 hours. If you have sedation you **must** have someone to drive you home and stay with you for 24 hours.

Other Information

The unit is located in Core A on level 1 and is sign posted "Endoscopy". Please make your way to the Day Treatment Unit (DTU) waiting room and check in at the reception desk.

If you may be pregnant, please contact the unit as soon as possible.

If you have any questions you may contact the Endoscopy Unit between 8am – 6pm weekdays:

Nursing Enquiries

Tel: 01733 677433

Tel: 01733 673981

Booking Enquiries

Tel: 01733 677433

Alternatively you can find more information on our website address:

www.nwangliaft.nhs.uk

Peterborough City Hospital, Edith Cavell Campus, Bretton Gate, Peterborough, PE3 8GZ