Flexible Sigmoidoscopy with Enema

Information for patients

Endoscopy Unit,
The Royal Infirmary of Edinburgh

Endoscopy Nurses: 0131 242 1600
Endoscopy Booking Line: 0131 536 4162

This document contains important information about your upcoming investigation and should be read immediately, giving you time for questions, if you have any.

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Introduction

You have been advised by your GP or hospital doctor to have an investigation known as a flexible sigmoidoscopy. This is an examination of your lower colon (large bowel).

If you are unable to keep your appointment, please notify the department as soon as possible. This will enable the staff to arrange another date and time for you (and give your appointment to someone else).

It is essential that you read this booklet thoroughly and carefully.
Please bring this booklet and appointment letter with you when you attend.

Consent

This procedure requires your formal consent. This booklet has been written to enable you to make an informed decision about agreeing to the procedure. At the back of the booklet is the consent form.

The consent form is a legal document, therefore please read it carefully. Once you have read and understood all the information, including the possibility of complications, and you agree to undergo the procedure, please sign and date the consent form. You will notice that the consent form is duplicated, allowing you to keep a copy for your records. Please fill it in while it is still attached to this booklet.

If however there is anything you do not understand or wish to discuss further, but still wish to attend, do not sign the form, but bring it with you and you can sign it after you have spoken to a health care professional.

If having read the information you do not wish to go ahead with the procedure, or want to consider alternative methods of investigation, please discuss with your GP or hospital doctor as soon as possible before the date of your appointment.

Sedation

If you are having sedation, the drug can remain in your system for up to 24 hours and you may feel drowsy later on, with intermittent lapses of memory.

If you are having a procedure under sedation, you MUST have someone available to accompany you home, and if you live alone, to stay with you overnight.

If this is not possible it may be necessary to be admitted overnight after the procedure. Please notify the department as soon as possible if this is the case.

FAILURE TO DO THIS MAY RESULT IN YOUR TEST BEING CANCELLED ON THE DAY.
General information about the procedure

What is a flexible sigmoidoscopy?
A flexible sigmoidoscopy is an examination of the lower part of your colon or large intestine. The instrument used in this investigation is called a colonoscope. It is a flexible telescope which can be passed through the back passage (anus) and around the colon, relaying images back to the endoscopist on a TV screen.

During the investigation, the Endoscopist may need to take some tissue samples (biopsies) from the lining of your colon for analysis; this is painless. The samples may be retained. Photographs and/or a video recording may be taken for your records.

The procedure will be performed by, or under the supervision of, a trained doctor or nurse Endoscopist, and we will make the investigation as comfortable as possible for you. Because the examination is very quick and involves little discomfort, most patients have it performed without any medication. It is sometimes performed under “conscious sedation” in which a sedative and/or a painkiller are given by injection into a vein to make you relaxed and lightly drowsy, without being unconscious.

Why do I need to have a flexible sigmoidoscopy?
You have been advised to undergo this investigation of your colon to try and find the cause of your symptoms, help with treatment, or as part of bowel cancer screening.

What are the alternatives?
A Barium Enema or a CT-colonography scan are X-ray investigations which are alternatives to colonoscopy. Although neither usually require sedation and can be more comfortable for some patients, both involve exposure to radiation and require the same bowel preparation as colonoscopy. They are also less accurate at detecting some conditions, and do not allow tissue samples to be taken. If abnormalities are found on X-ray examinations, a subsequent colonoscopy is often necessary to confirm the diagnosis.

How long will I be in the Endoscopy department?
This largely depends on whether you have had sedation and how busy the department is. You should expect to be in the department for approximately 5-6 hours. The department also looks after emergencies and these can take priority over our outpatient lists. You may be in the department some time before the investigation, therefore you may want to bring something to read.

We recommend you do not bring any valuable items with you to the hospital.
Preparation

Eating and drinking

If your appointment is in the morning have nothing to eat after midnight but you may have water up until your appointment time.

If your appointment is in the afternoon you may have a light breakfast (tea & toast) no later than 8am.

We would ask that, the day before and the day of your tests, you avoid the following:

- Red or blackcurrant jellies (orange, green and yellow flavours may be taken);
- Blackcurrant cordial (orange and lime flavours may be taken).

Medication

Please do not take any iron tablets for seven days before the test
Fibre supplements (eg Fybogel, Regulan) must be stopped three days before the test
Anti-diarrhoea medication (eg Loperamide, Imodium, Lomotil, Codeine Phosphate) must be stopped three days before the test.

Anticoagulants
If you are on blood-thinning treatment (e.g. Warfarin or Clopidogrel) please telephone the Endoscopy Unit on 0131 242 1600, as special arrangements may need to be made for you.

Diabetes medication
If you have diabetes that is controlled by insulin or tablets, please ensure the Endoscopy Unit is aware so that the appointment can be made at the beginning of the list. Please see detailed guidelines about your medication printed in the back of this booklet.

Other medication
All other routine medications, including steroids, should be continued, but on the day of the examination, they may be taken following the procedure, depending on the time the procedure is scheduled.

If you are taking the oral contraceptive pill then other precautions should be taken, due to the bowel preparation causing diarrhoea.

Allergies
Please telephone the Endoscopy Unit on 0131 2421600 for information if you think you have a latex allergy.

If you have any other queries regarding your medications please telephone the Endoscopy Unit on 0131 2421600.
What happens when I arrive?

When you arrive in the department, a qualified nurse or health care assistant will meet you and will ask you a few questions, including about your arrangements for getting home. You will also be able to ask further questions about the investigation. The nurse will ensure you understand the procedure and discuss any outstanding concerns or questions you may have. They may insert a small cannula (plastic tube) into a vein in your arm through which sedation can be administered later.

You will have a brief medical assessment where a nurse will ask you some questions regarding your medical condition and any surgery or illnesses you have had. This is to confirm that you are fit to undergo the investigation. Your blood pressure and heart rate will be recorded, and if you have diabetes, your blood glucose level will also be recorded.

If you have not already done so, and you are happy to proceed, you will be asked to sign your consent form at this point.

The nurse will ask you to remove your lower garments and put on a hospital gown. You will then be given an enema to clean the lower part of your colon. Enemas often begin to work very quickly and you may feel the urge to move your bowels almost immediately it is inserted, however please try to retain the enema for as long as possible to allow it to be completely effective.

Toilets are quickly accessible on the ward for your convenience. The nurse will advise you on all aspects of this part of your treatment.

If you have sedation you will not be permitted to drive or use public transport so you must arrange for a responsible adult to accompany you home and stay with you for 24 hours. The nurse will need to be given their telephone number so that they can be contacted when you are ready for discharge.

The Flexible Sigmoidoscopy procedure

You will be escorted into the procedure room where the endoscopist and the nurses will introduce themselves. You will also be able to ask further questions about the investigation.

The nurse looking after you will ask you to lie on your left side. If you are having sedation, the medication will be administered into the cannula in your vein which will make you relaxed and lightly drowsy but not unconscious. This means that, although drowsy, you will still hear what is said to you and therefore will be able to follow simple instructions during the examination. Some patients experience amnesia with the sedation so that afterwards they remember very little of the procedure, but this does not always happen.

During the procedure we will monitor your breathing, heart rate and oxygen levels. This is done by means of a probe attached to your finger or earlobe. Your blood pressure may also be recorded during the procedure using a cuff which will inflate on your arm from time to time. You may also be given oxygen to breathe through a mask or small tubes placed at your nose.
The endoscopist will first perform a finger examination of your back passage (anus) before passing the colonoscope. The examination involves manoeuvring the colonoscope around the lower third of your colon (large intestine). Air is passed into the colon during the investigation to aid the passage of the colonoscope. There are some bends that naturally occur in the colon and negotiating these may be uncomfortable for short periods of time. The examination usually takes less than 10 minutes to complete.

**Colonic polyps**
Polyps are found in up to a third of examinations. A polyp is a small growth on the lining of the colon. Most polyps are benign. We usually recommend their removal (polypectomy) at the time of the procedure, to avoid them becoming larger or developing complications over time. Some polyps are attached to the colon wall by a stalk, like a mushroom, whereas others are flat without a stalk.

**Polypectomy**
A polyp may be removed by placing a snare (wire loop) around the polyp and removing the polyp by tightening the snare, using high frequency electrical current (diathermy) on larger polyps to prevent bleeding.

Flat polyps (without any stalk) can be removed by a procedure called EMR (Endoscopic Mucosal Resection). This involves injecting the lining of the colon that surrounds the flat polyp. This raises the area and allows the wire loop snare to capture the polyp.

Smaller polyps can be removed using diathermy via special forceps. These hold the polyp whilst the diathermy is applied, therefore destroying the polyp.

**Risks of the procedure**
The doctor who has requested the procedure will have considered and discussed this with you. The risks should be weighed against the benefit of having the procedure carried out. There are two sets of procedural risks you should be aware of:

**Risks associated with intravenous sedation**
Sedation can occasionally cause problems with breathing, heart rate and blood pressure. If any of these problems do occur, they are normally transient. Careful monitoring by a fully trained endoscopy nurse ensures that any potential problems can be identified and treated rapidly. Older patients and those who have significant health problems (for example, people with significant breathing difficulties due to a bad chest) may be assessed by a doctor before having the procedure. In these situations it may be advised that less or no sedation is used, as the risks of complications from sedation may be higher.

**Risks associated with the endoscopic examination**
Flexible sigmoidoscopy is generally a very safe investigation, but as with any invasive procedure it has the possibility of complications. “Trapped wind” after the procedure is the most common side effect. More serious complications occur infrequently but can include:
Perforation (or tear) of the lining or wall of the colon. An operation is nearly always required to repair the hole. The risk is approximately 1 for every 15,000 examinations. The risk of perforation is higher with polyp removal.

Bleeding may occur at the site of biopsy or polyp removal (risk approximately 1 for every 100-200 examinations where this is performed). The degree of bleeding is usually minor and stops on its own, but if necessary it can be controlled by cauterization, injection, or clips placed through the colonoscope.

After the procedure

Your blood pressure and heart rate will be recorded and if you have diabetes, your blood glucose will be monitored. Should you have underlying breathing difficulties or if your oxygen levels were low during the procedure, we will continue to monitor your breathing.

Once you have recovered from the procedure and any sedation given you will be offered a hot drink and toast/sandwiches.

Before you leave the department, the nurse or endoscopist will discuss the findings and any medication or further investigations required. They will also tell you if you need further appointments, and you will also be given some written information.

If the person accompanying you has left the department, the nursing staff will telephone them when you are ready for discharge.

If you have had sedation you should not drive, take alcohol, care for dependents, sign any legally binding documents or operate machinery or potentially hazardous household appliances for 24 hours following the procedure.

Points to remember

- If you are having sedation, you must have someone to accompany you
- If you have serious cardiac or renal disorders please contact us before starting your bowel preparation.
- Our aim is for you to be seen and have your procedure as soon as possible after your arrival. However, the department is very busy and also deals with emergencies so it is possible under these circumstances that your procedure may be delayed.
- The hospital cannot accept any responsibility for the loss or damage to personal property during your time on these premises.
- If you have any problems with worsening abdominal pain or continuing bleeding after your procedure, please contact the endoscopy department between the hours of 7am – 1700 Monday to Friday on 0131 242 1600.

Outwith these times please contact, NHS 24 on 08454 24 24 24.
Information for patients with diabetes

You should inform the Endoscopy department about your diabetes and request an early morning appointment.

Diet and tablet-controlled diabetes (Type 2 diabetes)

Preparation – two days before your procedure
When following the low fibre diet, on the first day try to make sure you eat your usual amounts of carbohydrate from the allowed list: e.g. white bread, white rice, pasta etc. Continue to take your usual tablets and check your blood glucose levels as usual.

Day before the Flexible sigmoidoscopy - one day before your procedure
You may drink water, sugar-free squash, sugar-free carbonated drinks, clear soup. Tea and coffee before lunch with milk, after lunch without milk, Bovril and sugar-free, clear jelly (green and yellow only). Remember that these will not provide any carbohydrate.

To include some carbohydrate in your diet, you will need to drink some fluids containing sugar. It is probably best to drink these at regular intervals throughout the day. The following contain a similar amount of carbohydrate to one medium sized slice of bread:

- 150mls/5 fl oz. unsweetened clear apple juice
- 150mls/5 fl oz unsweetened clear grape juice
- 60mls/2 fl oz ordinary sweetened squash
- 75mls/2.5fl oz traditional lucozade
- 250mls/8fl oz ordinary lemonade
- 150ml/5fl oz cola
- 100g/4oz ordinary clear jelly (green and yellow only, not red or blackcurrant)

If on Metformin do not take until you are eating again after the flexible sigmoidoscopy
If on Rosiglitazone (Amaryl) or Pioglitazone (Starlix) do not take until after the flexible sigmoidoscopy
If on Gliclazide, Glibenclamide, Tolbutamide, Repaglanide or Glimepiride do not take the evening doses.

The day of the Flexible sigmoidoscopy
Check your blood glucose levels on waking. If your blood glucose is less than 5 mmol/l, or you feel that your blood glucose level may be low, have a small glass of a sugar-containing drink. Inform the nurse on arrival in the Endoscopy unit that you have done this. A nurse will check your blood glucose level when you arrive in the Endoscopy unit.

Do not take your morning dose of tablets; bring your tablets with you to have after the procedure when you have had something to eat.
Report to the nursing staff if you have needed glucose before arriving and inform them immediately if you feel ‘hypo’ at any time during your visit
Your dosage of tablets can be given as soon as you are able to eat and drink safely; the nursing staff will inform you when it is safe.
Insulin Treated diabetes (Type 1 and 2)

Preparation

Two days before your procedure
When following the diet, on the first day try to make sure you eat your usual amounts of carbohydrate from the allowed list: e.g. white bread, white rice, pasta etc. Continue to take your usual insulin and check your blood glucose levels as usual.

The day before your procedure
You may drink water, sugar-free squash, sugar-free carbonated drinks, clear soup; tea and coffee before lunch with milk, after lunch without milk. Bovril and sugar free, clear jelly (green and yellow only). Remember that these will not provide any carbohydrate.

To include some carbohydrate in you diet, you will need to drink some fluids containing sugar. It is probably best to drink these at regular intervals throughout the day. The following contain a similar amount of carbohydrate to one medium sized slice of bread:

- 150mls/5 fl oz. unsweetened clear apple juice
- 150mls/5 fl oz unsweetened clear grape juice
- 60mls/2 fl oz ordinary sweetened squash
- 75mls/2.5fl oz traditional lucozade
- 250mls/8fl oz ordinary lemonade
- 150ml/5fl oz cola
- 100g/4oz ordinary clear jelly **(green and yellow only, not red or blackcurrant)**

Monitor your blood glucose levels at least four times during the day, but ideally you should monitor even more frequently than this. Continue to take your daily insulin injections, but the amount you take may need to be altered according to how your blood glucose levels are behaving and how much carbohydrate-containing drinks you are taking. In general, insulin doses often need to be reduced by one quarter to one third.

You should reduce your evening insulin injection by one third, unless your blood glucose levels are running very high (e.g. greater than 15 mmols/l) when you should leave your dose unaltered.

If you have concerns about adjusting your insulin dosage please contact the Diabetes Specialist Nurses on 0131 242 1470, to discuss appropriate measures.

The day of the procedure
Check your blood glucose levels on waking. If your blood glucose level is less than 5 mmol/l, or you feel that your blood glucose level may be low, have a small glass of a sugar-containing drink. Inform the nurse on arrival in the Endoscopy unit that you have done this. A nurse will check your blood glucose level when you arrive in the Endoscopy unit.

Do not take your morning dose of insulin; bring your insulin with you to have after the procedure.
Report to the nursing staff if you have needed glucose before arriving and inform them immediately if you feel ‘hypo’ at any time during your visit.

Your dosage of insulin can be given as soon as you are able to eat and drink safely; the nursing staff will inform you when it is safe.

**Carrying glucose to treat hypoglycaemia**
If you are on tablets or insulin for your diabetes, then on the day before and day of the procedure carry glucose tablets (*Dextrosol*) in case of hypoglycaemia. As these are absorbed quickly through the tissues of the mouth, if sucked, they will not interfere with the procedure. Take three (3) tablets initially, followed by a further three (3) if symptoms continue after 15 minutes. If your medication has been adjusted this should not be a problem.

**Blood glucose monitoring**
If you usually test your blood glucose levels, check them, as usual, on the morning of the procedure and carry your equipment with you to the appointment.

If you do not usually test your blood, do not worry, your blood glucose levels will be checked when you arrive for the procedure.
Location of the Endoscopy Unit
The endoscopy unit is located within the Medical Daycase Unit of the Royal Infirmary

Directions to the Medical Day Case Unit

If entering via North Junction Road/Car park B: Entrance signed Day Case & Day Surgery (No.2 on map) adjacent to Main Front Entrance (West)

If entering via South Junction Road/Car park C: Enter the hospital through Main Rear Entrance (East). Continue through main mall and exit at Main Front Entrance (West). Turn left and enter at Day Case & Day Surgery (No.2 on map).

Please report to reception desk on arrival.

Plan of the hospital and grounds. Entrance to Endoscopy Unit is at “2”
Location of the Royal Infirmary of Edinburgh.
The hospital is on the south side of Edinburgh on old Dalkeith Road (A7).
The full address is:
Royal Infirmary of Edinburgh, 51 Little France Crescent, Old Dalkeith Road, EH16 4SA

By Public Transport

The following services stop at the hospital, either at the West main entrance bus stop, or close by on Old Dalkeith Road.

LRT 8, Muirhouse to Little France
LRT 18, Gyle Centre to Little France
LRT 21, Gyle Centre to Little France
LRT 24, Davidson’s Mains to Little France
LRT 33 & N33 Baberton Mains to Little France
LRT 38, Muirhouse to Little France
LRT 49, The Jewel to NRIE
Munros 51 or 52, Edinburgh to Jedburgh or Kelso respectively.
First 79, Haymarket to Rosewell
First 86, Clerwood to Mayfield
Eve Car and Coaches 128, Haddington to Little France
First 140 & 142, Rosewell to NRIE, passing Musselburgh

Please note that the proposed services and timetables may have changed by the time of your appointment, therefore you are advised to check the details by contacting the City of Edinburgh Council’s Traveline or the bus operator on the numbers below.

Contact details for full timetables or further information are:
Lothian Buses: 0131 555 6363  www.lothianbuses.co.uk
First Edinburgh: 0131 663 9233  www.firstedinburgh.co.uk
Stagecoach: 01592 642394  www.stagecoachbus.com/fife
Munros: 01835 862253
Traveline 0800 23 23 23

By car:

Directions from City Centre – Leave the city centre via North Bridge at the East end of Princes Street. Follow this road for approx. two and a half miles until you reach the Liberton Road/Lady Road junction. Turn left on to Lady Road. Go straight over the Lady Road roundabout to the Cameron Toll roundabout. Take the 3rd exit sign posted to Dalkeith and New Royal Infirmary (A7). Continue on this road for around ¾ mile. The hospital is on the left hand side.

Directions from Bypass – Leave the Edinburgh City Bypass (A720) at the Sheriffhall Roundabout onto Old Dalkeith Road (A7) toward Edinburgh City Centre. Turn right into the hospital after just over 2 miles.
Entry to the site is via two access roads, one to the north and one to the south of the site. The nearest Car Park and drop off point to our department is reached by entering the North Junction road.

Please use Car Park B and enter the Hospital by the entrance signed Day Case & Day Surgery.

There are free disabled parking spaces located near the main entrances. The current parking charges for all other patients and visitors are:

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<td>4-5 hours</td>
<td>£5.20</td>
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<tr>
<td>5-6 hours</td>
<td>£6.40</td>
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<tr>
<td>6-24 hours</td>
<td>£7.00</td>
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**By bicycle/motorbike:**

New cycle/bus lane from Cameron Toll to the Royal Infirmary of Edinburgh via Old Dalkeith Road, as well as improvements to the cycle and footpaths on Craigmillar Castle Road, may make this an option for some patients and visitors.

There is currently provision to park both bicycles and motorbikes on site, free of charge. Motorcycle parking is within marked spaces out with the car parks at various points around the perimeter of the building. Cycle parking is available close to all the entrances to the building, in the form of Sheffield stands. CCTV monitors these areas at all times.
Consent Form
Patient agreement to endoscopic investigation or treatment

Name of procedure/s (include a brief explanation if the medical term is not clear)

Flexible sigmoidoscopy
Examination of the lower colon (large intestine) with a flexible endoscope (with or without biopsy, photography, removal of polyps, injection treatment)
Biopsy samples will be retained

Statement of patient
You have the right to change your mind at any time, including after you have signed this form

I have read and understood the information in the attached booklet including the benefits and any risks.
I agree to the procedure described in the booklet and on this form.
I understand that you cannot give me a guarantee that a particular person will perform the procedure. The person will, however, have appropriate experience. If a trainee performs this examination it will be performed under supervision by a fully qualified practitioner.

I would like to have sedation: Yes ☐ No ☐ Please tick box

Signed (patient) ___________________________ Date ___________________________
Name (print in capitals) ___________________________

If you would like to ask further questions please do not sign the form now. Bring it with you and you can sign it after you have spoken to the healthcare professional.

Confirmation of consent
(to be completed by a healthcare professional when patient is admitted for procedure)

I have confirmed that the patient/guardian understands what the procedure involves, including the benefits and any risks
I have confirmed that the patient/guardian has no further questions and wishes for the procedure to go ahead

Signed ___________________________ Date ___________________________
Name (print in capitals) ___________________________ Designation ___________________________

(If your patient requires further information please complete page 3 of this consent form)
**Name of procedure/s** (include a brief explanation if the medical term is not clear)

**Flexible sigmoidoscopy**
Examination of the lower colon (large intestine) with a flexible endoscope (with or without biopsy, photography, removal of polyps, injection treatment)

**Biopsy samples will be retained**

**Statement of patient**
You have the right to change your mind at any time, including after you have signed this form

I have read and understood the information in the attached booklet including the benefits and any risks.

I agree to the procedure described in the booklet and on this form.

I understand that you cannot give me a guarantee that a particular person will perform the procedure. The person will, however, have appropriate experience. If a trainee performs this examination it will be performed under supervision by a fully qualified practitioner.

I would like to have sedation:  
Yes ☐  No ☐  Please tick box

Signed (patient)  ___________________________  Date  ________________

Name (print in capitals)  ___________________________

If you would like to ask further questions please do not sign the form now. Bring it with you and you can sign it after you have spoken to the healthcare professional.

**Confirmation of consent**
(to be completed by a healthcare professional when patient is admitted for procedure)

I have confirmed that the patient/guardian understands what the procedure involves, including the benefits and any risks

I have confirmed that the patient/guardian has no further questions and wishes for the procedure to go ahead

Signed  ___________________________  Date  ________________

Name (print in capitals)  ___________________________  Designation  ________________

(If your patient requires further information please complete page 3 of this consent form)
Statement of healthcare professional (to be completed by a healthcare professional with appropriate knowledge of proposed procedure, as specified in the consent policy)

In response to a request for further information I have explained the procedure to the patient. In particular I have explained:

The intended benefits

1. Investigation of symptoms
2. Endoscopic therapy

Potential Risks

1. Procedure risks:
2. Sedation risks:

I have also discussed what the procedure is likely to involve, the benefits and risks of any available alternative investigations/treatments (including no treatment), any extra procedures which may become necessary and any particular concerns of those involved.

Signed

Date

Name (print in capitals)  

Designation

Statement of interpreter where appropriate

I have interpreted the information above to the patient/guardian to the best of my ability and in a way in which I believe she/he/they can understand.

Signed

Date

Name (print in capitals)