

# Flexible Sigmoidoscopy

A flexible sigmoidoscopy is an exam of the rectum and lower colon. It is done with a flexible scope called a colonoscope or sigmoidoscope. It takes about 10 minutes.

## Preparation

To help prepare for a smooth process, we will call you three times before your appointment. Please let us know if you do **not** want us to say that we are calling from Memorial Sloan-Kettering. Your privacy is very important to us.

- One week before the exam, someone will call to confirm your appointment. They will also confirm the name of your doctor. You will be asked for a phone number where you can be reached three days before the exam.
- A nurse will contact you three days before your procedure between 8 AM and 5 PM. She or he will:
  - Ask you brief questions about your medical history.
  - Confirm that you are having a flexible sigmoidoscopy.
  - Tell you about the medicines you should or should not take on the morning of your exam. It is very important that you tell the nurse the name of all the medicines that you are taking.
  - Answer any questions you may have about the exam.
  - If you cannot receive the phone call three days before your exam, you must contact us. Call no later than 12 noon on the day before the exam. The phone number is (212) 639-5750.
- 24 hours before the procedure, you will receive a call telling you your arrival time.
- If you want to cancel or reschedule, you must contact the doctor who scheduled your exam.

## Bowel Preparation

- Purchase:
  - one 10-ounce bottle of Citrate of Magnesia
  - one Fleet® Enema.
 You will use these items to clean your lower colon.
- You must follow a clear liquid diet on the day before your procedure.

## One Day Before the Procedure

You may only have foods listed in the clear liquid diet below. Do not have any clear liquids that are red or purple.

### Clear Liquid Diet

Food Groups	Foods Recommended	Foods Excluded
Soups	Clear broth or bouillon, clear consommé, packaged broth	All others
Sweets & Desserts	Gelatin, popsicles, sugar, honey, sugar substitutes, clear hard candy without a center filling, e.g., sour balls	All others
Beverages	Clear fruit juices, such as apple or white grape; black coffee or tea, Gatorade®, and sodas such as 7-Up®, ginger ale, and seltzer water	All others including milk, cream, and juices with pulp

To prevent feeling weak, it is important that you drink an adequate amount of fluids listed on the clear liquid diet. Have these clear liquids at your normal mealtimes and also between meals.

- Drink the 10-ounce bottle of Citrate of Magnesia between the hours of 2 PM and 6 PM. It will cause multiple bowel movements and diarrhea. It often works within 30 minutes, but may take as long as 3 hours. It is important for you to be near a restroom after starting your bowel prep.
- Do not eat or drink after midnight on the day before your procedure.

## The Day of the Procedure

- Take only those medicines the nurse told you to take during the pre-procedure phone call.

### Follow these directions for a tap water enema:

1. Empty the contents from the Fleet Enema bottle. Fill the bottle with room temperature tap water.
2. Apply Vaseline or A & D ointment to the anus. This prevents irritation.
3. Lie on your left side with your right knee bent in toward your chest.
4. Remove the protective cap on the enema bottle. Insert the tip into your rectum.
5. Squeeze the bottle until it is empty.
6. Remove the tip from your rectum. Hold the water until you feel the urge to move your bowels. Remaining in the left-sided position helps the enema to work.
7. Expel the water in the toilet. If solid waste is present in the toilet, repeat the enema until the water is clear.

## Coming in for the Procedure

- Leave your valuables at home.
- Do not wear contact lenses, body piercing jewelry, or other jewelry.
- Shower using soap and water the night before or the morning of your procedure.
- Do not apply any lotion, cream, powder, makeup, or perfume.

- Enter the hospital through the main entrance at 1275 York Avenue. Take the escalator up to the Main Level. Take the “M” elevators to the 2nd floor. You will see two large glass double doors when you exit the elevator. This is your destination.
- Before the procedure you will be shown into a dressing room and asked to change into a hospital gown.
- A nurse:
  - will briefly interview you and take your vital signs.
  - will explain the flexible sigmoidoscopy.
  - will answer any questions you have.
  - may obtain bloodwork if your doctor has ordered it.
- The doctor will review the purpose of the exam and the sensations you may have during and after the exam. You will also be asked to sign a consent form.

### **The Procedure**

1. You may be sedated for the procedure.
2. You will lie on your left side on an exam bed with your knees bent.
3. The doctor will first do a rectal exam with a gloved, lubricated finger. Then the scope will be placed in your rectum.
4. The doctor may take a biopsy or remove growths or polyps. A biopsy is done on a small piece of tissue. The tissue is examined under a microscope.
5. When the exam is completed, the doctor will remove the scope.

### **After the Procedure**

1. You may resume your normal activities.
2. You do not have to be on a special diet unless your doctor gives you other instructions.
3. If you had a biopsy, you may notice a little bleeding on your bowel movement or toilet tissue. This is expected. It should be gone in 24 hours. If you still see blood after 24 hours or if you have bleeding between bowel movements, call your doctor.

If you have any questions or concerns, please call your primary doctor.

Your Doctor: \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_



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