

Acute Services Division

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Information for Patients – Rigid Sigmoidoscopy

Your doctor has arranged for you to have an examination called a Sigmoidoscopy. This leaflet contains information which we hope you will find helpful.

What is a Sigmoidoscopy?

A Sigmoidoscopy is a procedure in which your lower bowel is examined using an instrument called a Sigmoidoscopy.

Before the Sigmoidoscopy

In order for the doctor or nurse to get a clear view, your rectum and lower colon need to be as empty as possible.

On the day of your appointment it is important that you use the suppositories which are enclosed. They are small simple and easy to use and there are no side effects associated with them.

1. Peel the plastic covering from the suppository and moisten the tip with water before insertion.
2. Using the gloves provided, insert the two suppositories into your back passage.
3. The suppositories should work within 20 minutes to 1 hour.
4. It is important to stay next to a toilet until you have completely emptied your bowel.

* You are able to eat and drink as normal throughout the day.

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During the Sigmoidoscopy

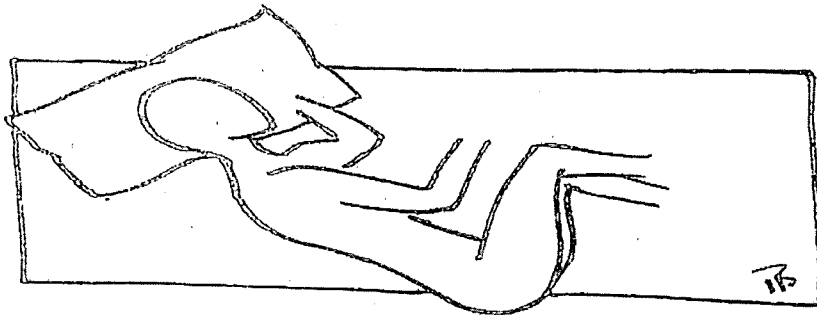
The test takes just a few minutes and is not usually painful but may be a little uncomfortable.

You will be asked to lie on your side with you knees drawn up toward your chest.

The doctor or nurse will gently insert a gloved and lubricated finger into the rectum to check for blockage and to widen the anus. Then the Sigmoidoscope will be inserted and gently pushed further into the rectum and colon. Air is gently pumped through the Sigmoidoscope to help viewing. This may cause you to feel bloated and uncomfortable and give you an urge that you need to 'move your bowels' (defecate). As the Sigmoidoscope is slowly removed, the lining of the bowel is carefully examined.

Sometimes a small sample (biopsy) of bowel lining may be taken during the procedure. The sample is sent to the laboratory to be looked at under the microscope. It may also be tested for various conditions that can affect the bowel. If a biopsy is carried out, you may notice a little blood which is normal.

Position for Sigmoidoscopy



After the Sigmoidoscopy

The air which has been inflated into your bowel gradually passes back out naturally but some patients experience crampy pains and excess wind which is normal.

Queries

If you have any questions regarding the procedure, you can contact clinic staff on the numbers shown at the top of this leaflet.