

**NHS Forth Valley
Endoscopy Department**

Guidelines for the Use of the Enema

Patient Information Leaflet



We suggest you read all the way through these guidelines before using the enema. If this is the first time you have used an enema don't worry. Enemas are safe, gentle and surprisingly easy to use.

Most people find it convenient and comfortable to use the enema at home. If you feel you can not do it yourself please contact the Endoscopy Unit for advice on 01324 567518.

Why use an enema?

In order to see the lining of the bowel clearly during the examination it is important that the bowel is empty.

An enema is a quick convenient way of doing this.

When to use an enema?

- Around one hour before leaving home for the test.
- Do not eat for at least thirty minutes before the enema.
- Do not eat after using it. You will be able to eat straight after the test.
- You may drink before the test.
- You should use the enema even if you have just had your bowels opened.

When not to use the enema?

- Do not use the enema if you have diarrhoea or if you are having treatment for kidney disease or colitis.
- If you have not used the enema please bring it with you when you come for the test.

Before using the enema

- Make sure you are near a toilet.
- Find somewhere comfortable to lie down.
- Have a towel to lie on.
- Have a magazine or radio with you to occupy you while you are waiting for the enema to work.

How to use the enema

- Remove the cap from the enema nozzle.
- Smear the lubricating jelly on the enema nozzle (first three inches).
- Hold the enema upright so it does not spill.
- Lie on your left side on a towel.
- Insert nozzle gently into the back passage.
- Squeeze the contents into the back passage.
- When all the liquid is squeezed in, remove the nozzle and stay lying down on your left side.
- Try to hold the liquid for 5 minutes. Do not worry if you cannot hold it that long.
- Go to the toilet. Do not worry if you do not pass a motion.
- Stay near a toilet for the next hour.
- Some people may experience mild stomach cramp for a short while.
- If you feel faint or dizzy lie down until you feel better.
- The enema works almost immediately so you should have no problem travelling to the hospital.

If you can't go let us know!

Every month around 2,000 people across Forth Valley fail to turn up for hospital appointments. This costs the NHS millions of pounds each year and increases waiting times. So if you are unable to attend or no longer require your hospital appointment please let us know so we can offer it to someone else.

We are happy to consider requests for this publication in other languages or formats such as large print. Please call [01324 590886 \(9-5\)](tel:01324590886) to arrange this or email fv.disabilitydepartment@nhs.scot

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