

**NHS Forth Valley
Endoscopy Department**

Flexible Sigmoidoscopy

**Information for Patients
& Consent Form**



Introduction

It has been found necessary for you to undergo a flexible Sigmoidoscopy. This test involves passing a flexible tube with a light on the end, into your back passage to look at the lower part of your large bowel. This procedure can be a bit uncomfortable but most people manage this test **without** sedation. If you are unduly anxious or your bowel is very inflamed and painful, you may have a light sedative to make you more relaxed. The test itself takes 5-10 minutes but you may be in the department for 2-3 hours.

If you do have sedation, you will require to have someone to collect you and take you home.

Preparing for the Investigation

There is no need to fast before this test. You may have a light breakfast or lunch before you arrive.

It is very important that your bowel is as clean as possible. You will be sent an enema to take at home for this. Alternatively, when you arrive in the ward a Nurse will give you a small enema into the back passage, this will encourage your bowel to move. Your appointment time allows us time to prepare you for the test.

You may wish to bring your own dressing gown with you but there is no need to bring anything else.

Please inform us before your appointment if you think you may be pregnant.

What About my Medication?

Please stop taking any iron tablets or bulking agents such as Fybogel or Regulan at least one week before the appointment.

Please bring all your medications with you. Please complete the Consent Form and bring it with you.

The Investigation

The purpose of the procedure is to try and find the reason for your symptoms. We may take some specimens from the lining of the bowel for examination. If there are any small polyps or growths found, we may try to remove them or take a 'biopsy', (this is a painless sample taken from the lining of the bowel for examination in the laboratory).

It may be necessary to treat haemorrhoids (piles) with small rubber bands. This procedure, known as 'Rubber Band Ligation', is a relatively painless procedure and can be done during your test. The doctor will discuss this with you at the time and specific aftercare instructions will be given to you.

The procedure takes from 5-10 minutes. It is difficult to predict how long each procedure will take so we apologise if there is any delay before your procedure is carried out. A nurse will stay with you during the test to monitor and record your general condition.

If you opt for sedation, oxygen will be given to you through a facemask and your heart-rate will be monitored. Due to the sedation, you will have to stay until you have recovered from its main effects. This normally takes up to two hours but may occasionally take longer and require overnight admission. You will be given tea and biscuits on completion of the test.

Complications

Flexible Sigmoidoscopy mainly checks the left side of the colon where 80% of problems occur. The risks of complications are rare, however very occasionally patients react badly to the sedative and/or painkiller. Perforation of the bowel is rare but occurs in approximately 1 in 15000 procedures. This may require an operation to repair, and as with any other surgical procedure, can be a risk to life.

Bleeding following the removal of a polyp or biopsy is also rare, but the risks are increased if you are taking anticoagulants eg. Warfarin tablets. We may need to admit you to a ward for a few days in this case.

Your need for this procedure should be weighed up against the possible risks and complications. Your GP can help you with this decision.

After Effects

Patients commonly find some mild abdominal discomfort after the procedure that usually settles in 1-2 days. Due to the sedative you will be drowsy afterwards. You should not drive or operate machinery for a period of 24 hours after the procedure. Very occasionally patients react badly to the sedative.

Contact Us

If you have any queries, please do not hesitate to contact us:

**FORTH VALLEY ROYAL HOSPITAL – Endoscopy Unit
(01324 567518) Mon – Fri 9am – 4pm**

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) to arrange this or email fv.disabilitydepartment@nhs.scot**

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This includes corridors, doorways, car parks and any of our grounds. If you do smoke on NHS premises you may be liable to prosecution and a fine.



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