

WHAT IS FLEXIBLE SIGMOIDOSCOPY?

A flexible sigmoidoscopy is a procedure to look at the inside of the lower part of your colon (large bowel) using a flexible telescope.

What are the benefits of a flexible sigmoidoscopy?

During flexible sigmoidoscopy, we can obtain biopsies (removing small pieces of tissue) to help make diagnosis. We can also assess the sigmoid colon and rectum (lower part of your large bowel). Sometimes a polyp (small growth) is the cause of the problem, and we can remove it during the procedure.

What does the procedure involve?

A flexible sigmoidoscopy usually takes 15 to 20 minutes. You will be given an enema to clear contents of the lower part of your large bowel half an hour prior to procedure.

Procedure is often performed under sedation which will be administered by your anaesthetist on the day of procedure. This will help you to relax and feel more comfortable.

The endoscopist will place a flexible telescope into your back passage (anus). Air or water will be passed into your large bowel to help the endoscopist have a clear view. We can then assess problems such as inflammation or polyps. Most polyps can be removed painlessly and completely during procedure. We can also obtain biopsies and take photographs to help make a diagnosis.

What complications can happen?

The procedure is generally well tolerated and is very safe. You may experience mild bloating or abdominal discomfort. Complications such as bleeding or perforation (making a hole in your large bowel) are very rare.

How soon will I recover?

If you were given sedation, you will first be transferred to the recovery area where you can rest and have a drink. You will usually recover in about an hour, but this depends on how much sedative you were given. You should be able to return to work the next day unless you are told otherwise. You will be informed about what was found during procedure and any treatment will be discussed with you.

Please ensure you make arrangements for someone to drive you home after the procedure. Do NOT drive any type of vehicle or operate machinery until the next day. Do NOT drink alcohol and/or take other recreational drugs. They may react with the sedation drugs. Do NOT make important decisions or sign a legal document for the first 24 hours. Have an adult with you on the first night after your procedure. Notify Dr Seleem's rooms at Launceston Endoscopy Clinic on 03 6709 8012 during working hours or the hospital Emergency Department straight away if you have:

- severe ongoing abdominal pain, or fever
- black tarry motions or bleeding from the back passage

Please note that this document is intended to provide a general overview of an endoscopic procedure. It is not intended to serve as a substitute for a consultation or professional medical care.



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