

# Flexible Sigmoidoscopy

## VG Site

My specialist: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

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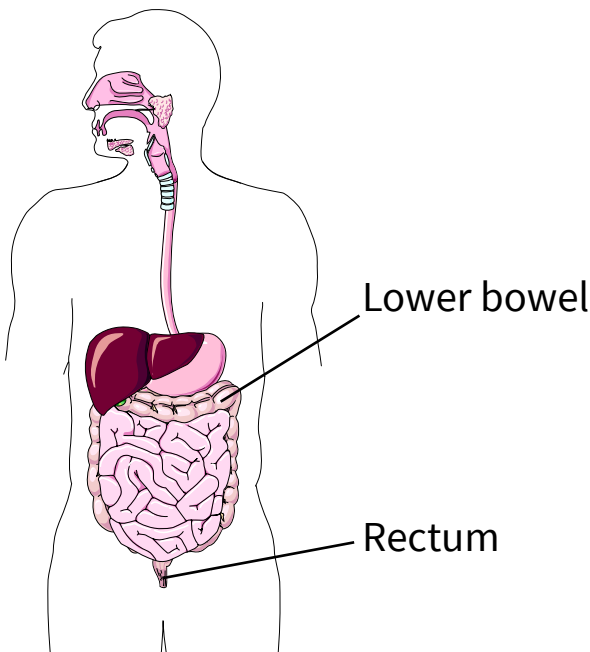
Also available in Arabic: AR85-1478



# Flexible Sigmoidoscopy

## What is a flexible sigmoidoscopy?

- This is a test to look at part of your lower bowel and your rectum (bum). The lower bowel is also called the lower large intestine or the sigmoid.



- This test is done by as specialist using an endoscope (a flexible tube with a light on the end).

Endoscope



## **What are the risks of this test?**

The risks depend on why you are having the test and on what the test shows. Your specialist will talk with you about the risks before your test.

### **Possible risks include:**

- › A tear in your bowel (1 in 10,000 chance). If this happens, you may need surgery to fix the tear.
- › Bleeding, if a tissue sample was taken (1 in 10,000 chance). This may stop on its own, or may need more treatment.
- › An infection from the equipment used for the test (1 in 1.8 million chance)
- › A reaction to the sedation medication
- › Soreness and/or a lump where the intravenous (I.V.) tube was put in. These should go away over a few weeks.
- › The specialist may not be able to finish the test because of technical problems.

## How do I get ready for this test?

You may have sedation (medication to help you relax) during this test. This is rare.

- If you have sedation, you must have a responsible adult:
  - › stay in the hospital during your test.
  - › take you home after your test.
  - › stay with you overnight.

If this is not possible, call your doctor before the test. We may have to cancel your test.

### Before your test:

- A booking clerk will call you to give you information about your appointment.
- We will give you the name of the specialist who will do your test, and the date, time, and place of your test.
- Plan to be off work the day of your test. Most people can go back to work the day after their test.
- Your specialist will give you instructions for cleaning your bowel. Please follow these instructions carefully.

- If your bowel is not cleaned the right way:
  - › the test will be less accurate.
  - › the specialist may not be able to finish the test.
- You will likely be asked to do an enema. We will give you instructions on how to do this before your appointment.
- Call your specialist if you need antibiotics for tests or dental work. Ask your specialist if you are not sure.
- **Tell the booking clerk and your specialist if you are taking these medications as these can raise your risk of bleeding:**
  - › Blood thinners like ASA (Aspirin<sup>®</sup>), warfarin, heparin (Fragmin<sup>®</sup>), dabigatran (Pradaxa<sup>®</sup>), rivaroxaban (Xarelto<sup>®</sup>), apixaban (Eliquis<sup>®</sup>), edoxaban (Lixiana<sup>®</sup>)
  - › Antiplatelets like clopidogrel (Plavix<sup>®</sup>), prasugrel, ticagrelor (Brilinta<sup>®</sup>)
- Tell your specialist if you have heart or lung disease.
- Tell your specialist if you are allergic to any medications.

**If you need to cancel your test, please call your specialist at least 3 days (72 hours) before your test is scheduled. This will give us time to book another patient.**

## The day of your test

It is very important to follow these instructions:

- If you take medication for your heart, blood pressure, or breathing, take your medication as usual.
- **Bring a list of all your medications** (including prescription and over-the-counter medications, inhalers, creams, eye drops, patches, herbal medications, vitamins, and supplements) with you to the hospital.
- **Do not wear any jewelry or bring any valuables with you to the hospital.** The hospital is not responsible for the loss of any items.
- **Do not use scented products.** Nova Scotia Health is scent-free.

## Where do I go for my test?

**You must register at the kiosk on the main floor of either the Dickson Building (main entrance) or the Centennial Building (main entrance).**

- Then go to the 9<sup>th</sup> floor of the Victoria Building at the Victoria General (VG) site. Check in at the registration desk.

- Be sure that you have enough time to park before your appointment. Parking at the VG site is limited.

## **How is the test done?**

- An I.V. tube may be put in your hand or arm. You will be given medication to help you relax, and to help with any pain.
- The specialist will put the endoscope into your rectum.
- They will use the endoscope to put air into your bowel. This will make your bowel get bigger so they can see it better.
- The air may cause mild cramping and/or pain, or give you gas. You may feel like you need to poop.
- The test will take about 5 minutes.

## **What will happen after the test?**

- **If you did not have sedation, you can leave the hospital right away.**
- **If you had sedation, you can leave about 30 to 45 minutes after your test.**
- You may feel like you need to pass gas or have a bowel movement (poop). Please try to pass the gas. This feeling should not last long.

## **If you had sedation:**

- **You must have a responsible adult take you home after your test and stay with you overnight.**
- **Do not walk home. You may take a bus or a taxi home only if a responsible adult goes with you.**

### **For the next 24 hours (1 day) after sedation:**

- **Do not drive a car or use any heavy machinery.**
- **Do not drink alcohol.**
- **Do not care for others (including children).**
- **Do not sign any legal or important papers, or make any financial (money) decisions.**



**Call your doctor if you have any of these symptoms after your test:**

- › **A lot of bleeding**
- › **Stomach pain**
- › **Bloating**

**If you cannot reach your doctor, go to the nearest Emergency Department right away.**

**What are your questions?**

**Please ask a member of your health care team. We are here to help you.**



This pamphlet is for educational purposes only. It is not intended to replace the advice or professional judgment of a health care provider. The information may not apply to all situations. If you have any questions, please ask your health care provider.

Find this pamphlet and all our patient resources here:  
<https://library.nshealth.ca/Patients-Guides>

Connect with a registered nurse in Nova Scotia any time:  
Call 811 or visit: <https://811.novascotia.ca>

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