

# Flexible Sigmoidoscopy

## VG Site

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

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

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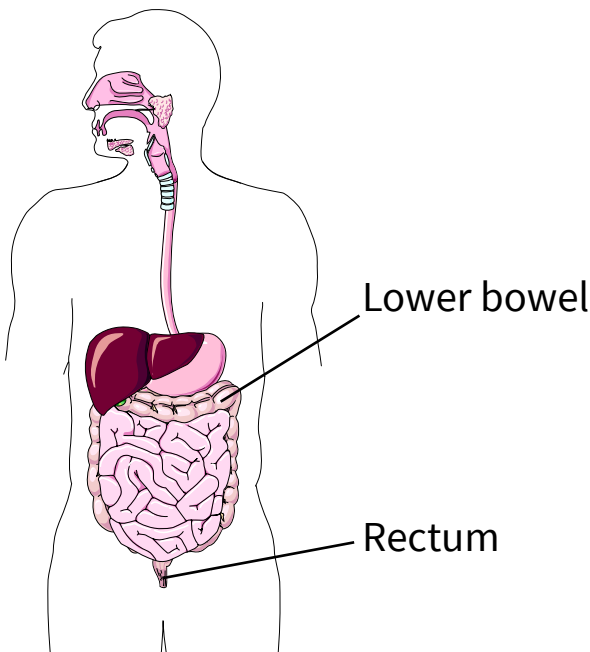
Also available in Arabic: AR85-1478



# 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.

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<https://library.nshealth.ca/Patients-Guides>

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

*Prepared by:* GI Unit, QE II, VG Site  
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WI85-0188 © May 2024 Nova Scotia Health Authority  
To be reviewed May 2027 or sooner, if needed.