

E06lite Flexible Sigmoidoscopy

This document will give you information about a flexible sigmoidoscopy. If you have any questions, you should ask your GP or other relevant health professional.

What is a flexible sigmoidoscopy?

A flexible sigmoidoscopy is a procedure to look at the inside of the left, lower part of the colon (large bowel) using a flexible telescope (see figure 1).

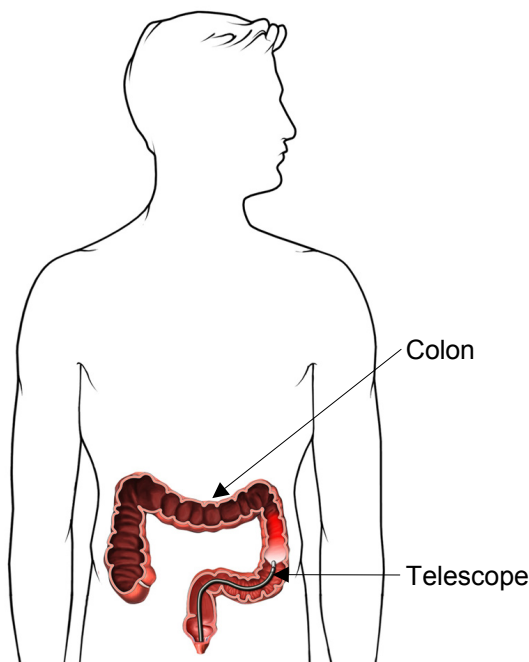


Figure 1

Flexible sigmoidoscopy

Sometimes a polyp (small growth) is the cause of the problem and the endoscopist may be able to remove it during the procedure.

Are there any alternatives to a flexible sigmoidoscopy?

Other options include a colonoscopy, a barium enema (an x-ray test of the large bowel) or a CT colography (a special scan of the large bowel).

What does the procedure involve?

A flexible sigmoidoscopy usually takes between a quarter of an hour and twenty minutes. The procedure involves placing a flexible telescope (endoscope) into the back passage and blowing some air into your large bowel to get a clear view. The endoscopist will be able to look for problems such as inflammation or polyps. They will be able to perform biopsies and take photographs to help make the diagnosis.

What complications can happen?

- Allergic reaction
- Breathing difficulties or heart irregularities
- Making a hole in the colon
- Bleeding
- Incomplete procedure

How soon will I recover?

If you were given a sedative, you will normally recover in about an hour. You may feel a bit bloated for a few hours but this will pass.

A member of the team will tell you what was found during the flexible sigmoidoscopy and will discuss with you any treatment or follow-up you need.

You should be able to go back to work the day after the flexible sigmoidoscopy.

Summary

A flexible sigmoidoscopy is usually a safe and effective way of finding out if you have a problem with the lower part of your large bowel.

Further information

- NHS smoking helpline on 0800 022 4332 and at www.smokefree.nhs.uk
- www.eatwell.gov.uk – for advice on maintaining a healthy weight
- www.eidoactive.co.uk – for information on how exercise can help you
- www.aboutmyhealth.org – for support and information you can trust
- British Society of Gastroenterology at www.bsg.org.uk
- Digestive Disorders Foundation at www.digestivedisorders.org.uk
- NHS Direct on 0845 46 47 (0845 606 46 47 – textphone)

Acknowledgements

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