

Flexible Sigmoidoscopy

What is a flexible sigmoidoscopy?

Flexible sigmoidoscopy is a test that allows the doctor to look at the rectum and the lower portion of your colon.

How do I prepare for the test?

- Your doctor will order your bowel preparation. Usually, the preparation consists of drinking a bottle of Magnesium Citrate and completing one or two enemas prior to the procedure; but, this could also include laxatives or diet modifications as well.
- If you have a history of renal failure or kidney disease, let your doctor know.
- You will be asked to not eat or drink anything after midnight the night before the procedure.
- All jewelry should be left at home.
- If you are taking Coumadin, Plavix, or other blood thinners, let your doctor know before the day of the exam.
- Be sure to let your doctor know if you are pregnant before the day of the exam.
- Arrange for a driver and someone to be with you for the day. You will not be allowed to drive if you receive sedation.

What are the potential complications?

- Undesired effects from anesthesia.
- A tear in the wall of the colon.
- Bleeding.
- If you have any questions, please ask your doctor.

What should I expect before the test?

- Your doctor will explain the risks and benefits of the test to you.
- You will sign a consent form for the procedure.

- A small IV will be put in a vein so sedation can be given during the procedure.
- Glasses will be removed prior to the procedure.

What can I expect during the test?

- You will lay on your left side.
- Your blood pressure, pulse, and oxygen levels will be monitored during the procedure.
- Your doctor may choose to take biopsies (small pieces of colon tissue) during the procedure. Polyps (small growths on the colon wall) will be removed when seen. Taking biopsies and removing polyps will not cause pain.

What can I expect after the test?

- Your blood pressure, pulse, and oxygen levels will be monitored in the recovery area.
- Your family and friends can be with you after the procedure.
- You might have oxygen on for a short time.
- You might feel bloating or cramping after the test because of the air that is put in your colon during the test. Passing the air will help this feeling go away.
- If you are taking Coumadin, Plavix, or other blood thinners, ask your doctor when to restart those specific medications.
- The nurse will give you written discharge instructions before you leave.

When can I expect my results?

- Your doctor will tell you what was found before you go home.
- You will receive your biopsy results in the mail in two to three weeks.
- You may call your doctor's office with any questions or concerns.