

What is a flexible sigmoidoscopy?

Flexible sigmoidoscopy allows the provider to look at the rectum and the lower portion of your colon.

How do I prepare for the flexible sigmoidoscopy?

- Your provider 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 provider 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.
- Some of the medicine you take may need to be stopped or adjusted temporarily. You should discuss all blood thinners, insulin, or diabetes medications with the prescribing provider at least 2 weeks before the flexible sigmoidoscopy. Do not stop these medications without the content of your provider.
- Be sure to let your provider know if you are pregnant before the day of the flexible sigmoidoscopy.
- 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 sedation.
- A tear in the wall of the colon.
- Bleeding.
- If you have any questions, please ask your provider.

What should I expect before the flexible sigmoidoscopy?

- Your provider will explain the risks and benefits of the flexible sigmoidoscopy 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 flexible sigmoidoscopy?

- You will lay on your left side.
- Your blood pressure, pulse, and oxygen levels will be monitored during the procedure.
- Your provider 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 flexible sigmoidoscopy?

- 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 will have oxygen on for a short time during the recovery phase.
- You might feel bloating or cramping after the flexible sigmoidoscopy because of the air that is put in your colon. Passing the air will help this feeling go away.

- If you are taking Coumadin, Plavix, or other blood thinners, ask your provider when to restart those specific medications.
- The nurse will give you written discharge instructions before you leave.

When can I expect my results?

- Your provider 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 provider's office with any questions or concerns.