

Are there any alternatives to sedation?

An alternative to sedation is Entonox – also known as gas and air (50% Nitrous Oxide / 50% Oxygen). Entonox is a very effective analgesia with rapid onset and rapid recovery. It has been shown to be very effective when used during colonoscopy and flexible sigmoidoscopy. The benefits of using Entonox are that you:

- are in control of your pain relief
- can drive after 30 minutes
- do not need anybody to stay with you.

Please note that Entonox is not suitable for everybody, please ask for advice.

What about my usual medications?

- If you are an Insulin dependent diabetic – please liaise with the Diabetic nurse at your GP practice.
- If you are prescribed Warfarin or Clopidogrel – or any other medications to thin the blood, please carefully follow the instructions given to you by the Specialist Screening Practitioner.

Contact us

If you are unsure about any of this information, have any questions or are unable to attend your appointment please contact the Specialist Screening nurse on this number.

Cornwall Bowel Cancer Screening Centre
01872 252076

If you would like this leaflet in large print, braille, audio version or in another language, please contact the Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) on 01872 252793



Flexible sigmoidoscopy

Bowel Cancer Screening Centre



One + all | we care

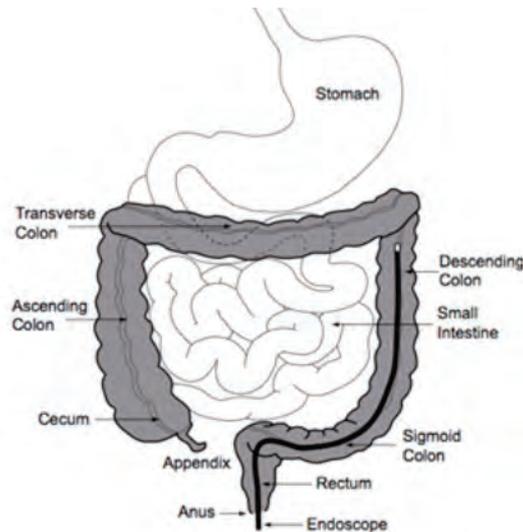
Who is this leaflet for?

Following the investigation into your bowel, you have been advised to have a flexible sigmoidoscopy. This may be for one of the following reasons:

- following colonoscopy, to check the polyp site to ensure polyps were completely removed
- to remove polyps seen at colonoscopy and not removed
- to remove polyps seen at CT colon
- to take biopsies of an abnormal area seen at CT colon.

What is a flexible sigmoidoscopy?

Flexible sigmoidoscopy is an examination very similar to a colonoscopy but only examining the lower third of your large bowel. The instrument used for this investigation is the same as used for a colonoscopy; it is a long thin flexible tube with a diameter about the same thickness as your little finger. It lights up the lining of your large bowel and has a sensor on the end to capture video images which are relayed back to a television screen.



How do I prepare for it?

To allow the endoscopist to see the lining of your bowel clearly, you will need to clear your bowel prior to the procedure. The Specialist Screening nurse will

have discussed this with you along with any diet restrictions – **please follow these instructions carefully.**

What does it involve?

1. For the procedure, you will lie on your left side on the examining couch. The endoscopist will insert an endoscope (a thin flexible, lighted tube) into your rectum (bottom).
2. The endoscope also blows air into your bowel, which inflates and stretches the bowel, enabling the endoscopist to see. This may give you a temporary bloating, cramping feeling in your abdomen.
3. During the investigation, we may need to take some tissue samples (biopsies) or remove polyps from the lining of your large bowel for further analysis – this is completely painless.
4. Photographs may also be taken for your medical records.

Are there any risks or complications?

All procedures carry some risk. Possible complications of sigmoidoscopy are:

- bleeding (1 in 250)
- perforation of the bowel (1 in 1000).

How long does it take?

Flexible sigmoidoscopy takes 10 to 20 minutes. During the procedure, you might feel pressure and slight cramping in your lower abdomen. You will feel better afterward when the air leaves your colon.

Will I have any sedation?

Flexible sigmoidoscopy is a short test and most people do not need to have sedation. If you are particularly anxious about the test, **intravenous sedation** may be helpful. You should discuss this with the screening practitioner to decide if this is the best option for you.

If you require sedation you will need to arrange somebody to collect you from the endoscopy unit and have a relative or friend to stay with you for 24 hours.