

Patient information leaflet: **Bowel Preparation**

This leaflet has been written for patients who have been referred for a colonoscopy or flexible sigmoidoscopy procedure at BMI The Alexandra Hospital.

Please note the information in this leaflet is provided as additional information for you. It is important that you also read the information sheet that is provided with your medication.

How do I prepare for the procedure?

Your bowel needs to be empty for the colonoscopy or flexible sigmoidoscopy procedure to be successful. Your specific instructions will be provided on a separate sheet, but the general recommendations are that you should:

- stop eating solid food the day before the procedure
- drink plenty of clear fluids in the 24 hours before your procedure
- take a strong laxative - the effects of this laxative can be quite powerful and you will need to stay close to a toilet.

Sometimes a flexible sigmoidoscopy test can be performed without dietary restriction or strong laxatives, but with a liquid enema given by a nurse 30 minutes prior to the test to clear the lower bowel.

If you are a diabetic or taking warfarin or clopidogrel tablets please contact the Endoscopy Unit.

What will happen when I arrive for my test?

When you come to the department, you will be admitted by a member of the nursing team. If you have any worries or questions at this stage do not be afraid to ask.

You will be asked to sign a consent form showing that you understand the procedure. The consent form is a legal document, so please read it carefully.

The procedure may be carried out using a sedative injection to make you feel drowsy and relaxed. It is not a general anaesthetic and you will not be unconscious, but you may not remember much about the procedure afterwards. You will need to bring a friend or relative with you to help you get home if you have had sedation.

What happens during the procedure?

Your procedure will be performed by your consultant and a qualified nurse will remain with you throughout the procedure. If you are having sedation a small needle will be placed in your arm. In the examination room you will be asked to lie on a trolley on your left side.

A clip will be placed on your finger to check your pulse rate and oxygen level. Oxygen may be administered into your nostril. You may also be given sedation to make you feel sleepy.

Your consultant will first examine the back passage with a gloved finger and some lubricating jelly. They will then pass the camera into the bowel and gently pass it around to the end (approximately 80cm). Air is pumped into your bowel to improve the views of the bowel wall. During the procedure you may be asked to turn from your side on to your back. At times colonoscopy can be uncomfortable, even with sedation. Flexible sigmoidoscopy is quicker and less uncomfortable and is often done without sedation.

If necessary, your consultant will take a biopsy (a small sample of tissue) and/or remove small benign growths of tissue called polyps using special instruments passed through the camera. You should not feel anything when this is done. The samples will be sent to a laboratory for further testing.

What happens after the test?

You will be taken into the recovery room at the hospital. Once we are happy with your condition, you will be offered a drink and a biscuit. You will be discharged by a member of the hospital team. Your consultant or a member of the hospital nursing team will tell you the test result. Please expect to be in the Alexandra hospital for up to two hours.

Going home

If you have had sedation for the procedure, it is essential that someone comes to the hospital to pick you up. Once home it is important to rest for the remainder of the day. Sedation lasts longer than you think, so if you have had sedation you should not:

- drive a car
- operate machinery
- drink alcohol
- make important decisions or sign important documents

You may have some mild and temporary after effects following a successful procedure, including:

- feeling bloated and uncomfortable due to trapped wind
- feeling sleepy as a result of the sedative
- slight bleeding from your back passage if you have had a biopsy or polyp removed

Who can I contact if I have any questions or problems?

If you have any concerns or problems please contact us on 0161 495 7046 (between 9.00am – 5pm, Monday to Friday).

Who can I contact if I need help out of hours?

If you experience heavy bleeding from the back passage, abdominal pain which is getting worse, or is more severe than any pain that you had before the test, with or without a high temperature you in the first few days following discharge, please call us on 0161 495 7046 or contact your out-of-hours GP or attend your local NHS hospital A&E department.

Who are we?

The Manchester Haemorrhoid Centre provides a comprehensive, expert diagnostic and treatment service for a wide aspect of surgical procedures. From minor surgery to fibre-optic endoscopy, bowel cancer surgery, advanced keyhole 'laparoscopic' surgery and ground-breaking treatment for haemorrhoids and colorectal disorders, our team are highly experienced and leaders in their field.

Find Out More

Based at BMI The Alexandra Hospital, The Manchester Haemorrhoid Centre provides a comprehensive diagnostic and treatment service for haemorrhoids and other colorectal disorders. To find out more about your treatment options or to make a self-referral, please telephone us on **0161 495 7046** or email **halo.surgeon@bmichoice.co.uk** to speak to a member of our team.