

# Sigmoidoscopy

## Patient Information



### What is Sigmoidoscopy?

Sigmoidoscopy is a procedure that allows the doctor to look directly at the lining of the lower end of your large bowel (sigmoid colon and rectum) to help find the cause of your symptoms. It is also possible to remove polyps during the test. Polyps are abnormal projections of tissue, like warts, which the doctor will want to examine in more detail under a microscope.

## How is the procedure conducted?

A special long and flexible tube with a light at its tip (colonoscope) is passed through the anus into the large bowel. Your doctor will be able to see the lining of your bowel on a screen. If needed, your doctor will do a biopsy, which is taking a sample of tissue for analysis. It is a safe and painless procedure.

## How do I prepare for the procedure?

When coming for the procedure, you should keep the following things in mind:

- You need to have the results of the following blood tests available before the procedure: Prothrombin Time (PT), Hemoglobin (HB) and platelet count.
- Do not eat any solids 6-8 hours before the procedure and discontinue the intake of clear liquids such as juices and water 4 hours before the procedure.
- Make sure you have one attendant to accompany you.
- Tell your doctor, if you are taking any blood thinning medications, as these may need to be stopped.
- Take your antihypertensive medication as per schedule.
- Consult your doctor, if you are on anti-diabetic medications.
- Inform your doctor if you have any allergies or have had a bad reaction to any procedure in the past.

## Day of Procedure:

- Leave all jewellery and valuables at home.
- Bring your MR card and admission form to the Endoscopy suite.
- Bring your blood test reports if done outside Aga Khan University Hospital.

## What will happen in the endoscopy suite?

- The doctor will explain the test and will ask you to sign a consent form. If you have any concerns, please ask the doctor.
- You will be asked to wear a hospital gown and to remove any false teeth.
- The nursing staff will give you an enema to make sure the bowel is clean.
- The nursing staff will take your temperature, pulse, blood pressure and oxygen saturation.
- The nursing staff will also insert an Intravenous (IV) cannula to administer medication before the procedure to make you feel more relaxed.

## What will happen during the procedure?

- You will be asked to lie down on a stretcher on your left side.
- A nurse will stay with you to monitor your vital signs and assist the doctor as necessary.
- The doctor may give you medication to make you feel relaxed and sleepy.
- The doctor will insert a lubricated sigmoidoscope (flexible tube) to examine your lower gut.
- The doctor may ask you to change positions during the test. It may take 30 minutes to complete the procedure.
- If required, biopsies will be taken.

- You may feel some bloating and a sensation of gas following the procedure. This feeling is due to the air that is put into your bowel to allow the doctor a clearer view. This air is removed at the end of the test.
- The sigmoidoscope is removed quickly and easily.

### What happens after the procedure?

- You will be left to rest for at least 15-30 minutes before getting dressed.
- A nurse will stay with you to monitor your blood pressure, heart rate and saturation.
- You may feel bloated from any air left in your bowel. This will pass when you walk. You do not need medication to relieve this sensation.
- You may eat a normal diet after you wake up.
- At the time of discharge, you will get an electronically typed report containing pictures from your sigmoidoscopy, medication prescription, discharge instructions, any additional investigations which might be needed and instructions for your next follow up with your doctor.

### Going Home After Procedure

- If you are going home, it is essential that someone comes to pick you up.
- If sedation is given, you will need to rest until the next day.

Please follow these instructions:

- Do not drive for at least 6 hours.
- Do not operate any machinery for the rest of the day.
- Refrain from smoking and alcohol use.
- By the next day, you should be able to resume normal activities.

### What are the possible complications of Sigmoidoscopy?

Following are some of the possible complications of sigmoidoscopy:

- Perforation, or tear, through the bowel wall that could require surgery.
- Bleeding might occur at the site of biopsy or polypectomy (removal of a polyp) but is usually minor. Bleeding can stop on its own or can be controlled through colonoscopy. Rarely surgery may be required.
- Contact your doctor if you notice:
  - Severe abdominal pain,
  - Fever and chills,
- Rectal bleeding. Note that bleeding can occur several days after the procedure.