

Following your Flexible Sigmoidoscopy *with sedation +/- polypectomy +/- biopsies

Other formats

If you need this information in another format such as audio CD, Braille, large print, high contrast, British Sign Language or translated into another language please contact the PALS desk on 01271 314090 or at rduh.pals@nhs.net.

After your flexible sigmoidoscopy, if you have had sedation, a responsible adult must collect you and stay with you for at least 12 hours post procedure, because you will be drowsy from the medication you have been given. Small amounts of sedation will remain in your body for up to 24 hours. During this period, although you may feel wide-awake you will still be under the influence of the sedation. Your concentration and co-ordination may be impaired and you may feel light-headed or faint.

Sedation can impair your reflexes and judgement

It is for these reasons that for 24 hours after your procedure you:

- Go home and take complete rest for the remainder of the day and have a quiet day tomorrow
- Must not drive a car (your car insurance is invalid for the 24-hour period)
- Must not ride a motorbike or bicycle
- Must not operate any machinery or electrical items, e.g. kitchen appliances
- Must not drink alcohol
- Must not take any sleeping tablets
- Must not sign any legally binding documents
- Do not bath or shower
- Must not work

What will happen after my test?

During your test, the doctor may have removed a polyp from your bowel (see your report). There are different types of polyps, so your polyp(s) has been sent to the laboratory at North Devon District Hospital to find out what type you have. You may need to have a further test to see if you have any more polyps in the remainder of your bowel. This may involve having a colonoscopy in the endoscopy unit, or a CT colonoscopy in the radiology department. During your flexible sigmoidoscopy, the doctor may also have taken some biopsies. These will also be sent to the laboratory to be analysed by a pathologist. The results will either be sent to your GP or you will have an appointment in the Outpatients Department to discuss your results with a hospital doctor

When can I eat and drink again?

As already advised, you must not drink alcohol for 24 hours after your procedure. Alcohol in combination with any sedation is likely to have a more sedative effect. Otherwise you can eat and drink as normal, unless advised with specific instructions. Normal food can be taken after the examination, though you may prefer light meals initially.

When I am at home, what if I feel unwell after the procedure?

After the procedure you may or may not encounter any of the following conditions:

Bloating and excess wind: In order to view the bowel properly and make a thorough investigation it is necessary to inflate your bowel with air. This may give you some abdominal discomfort due to flatulence and “wind” type pain for a day or so. To help to relieve this it is advisable, to walk around and drink warm drinks. This will help you pass the wind. You may also find that lying on your left hand side, with your knees up, hot water bottle on your tummy, may also help to pass wind. In most cases, the pain will disappear the instant the wind is passed.

Bleeding: During your procedure, you may have had some biopsies taken or some polyps removed. You may notice some traces of blood coming from your back passage, particularly when you open your bowels for the first time. This should settle down within 24 hours.

Fever: A temperature greater than 38 degrees is a sign that you could have developed an infection after your procedure. This is extremely rare but you should seek immediate medical advice for treatment.

Localised infection: For your procedure you will have had your medications administered through a special intravenous cannula. Sometimes the area can get sore and infected after the procedure. This may need a topical cream or some antibiotics to treat this. If this happens, please visit your GP for advice and treatment.

However, if these conditions become excessive, persistent and/or are accompanied by pain, please call for advice on the telephone numbers below.

Medications

You may resume normal medications after your flexible sigmoidoscopy, unless advised otherwise.

If a polyp was removed, do not take aspirin for a week afterwards.

If you take blood thinning medications please restart them on.....

You may take stool softeners and fibre/bran but do not take strong laxatives.

Please ask if you are not sure that a medication will be safe.

When will I get the results?

A nurse will speak to you before you leave the Gemini Endoscopy Suite and explain:

- What was seen and done during your procedure
- Whether if you will need any further follow up
- That a copy of your report will be sent to your GP today and any results should be with your GP within 2 weeks

What if I need further advice and assistance?

Please do not hesitate to contact us if you are worried about any symptoms you experience after your procedure.

- In normal working hours Monday to Friday 8am to 6.30pm, telephone the Gemini Endoscopy Suite on 01271 349180
- Outside these hours, contact your GP surgery or if in an emergency, come to the North Devon District Hospital A&E
- Alternatively, telephone NHS Direct on 111

PALS

The Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) ensures that the NHS listens to patients, relatives, carers and friends, answers questions and resolves concerns as quickly as possible. If you have a query or concern call 01271 314090 or email rduh.pals@nhs.net. You can also visit the PALS and Information Centre in person at North Devon District Hospital, Barnstaple.

Have your say

Royal Devon University Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust aims to provide high quality services. However, please tell us when something could be improved. If you have a comment or compliment about a service or treatment, please raise your comments with a member of staff or the PALS team in the first instance.

Tell us about your experience of our services. Share your feedback on the Care Opinion website www.careopinion.org.uk or freephone 0800 122 3135.

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