

Advice for Patients Having an Enema as Preparation for Flexible-Sigmoidoscopy

For your flexible sigmoidoscopy to be successful, your lower bowel needs to be completely empty of waste material.

During a flexible sigmoidoscopy your endoscopist passes a long flexible tube containing a camera and a light through your rectum and the lower (sigmoid) colon. This allows your endoscopist to have clear views of the lining of the lower digestive tract and allows your endoscopist to take tissue samples (biopsies) if necessary.

In preparation for your procedure it is important to ensure that your lower bowel is prepared as well as possible to ensure the procedure is successful, your doctor has decided that this can be done by an **enema**.

There are steps you can take prior to the administration of an enema that will help to ensure that the enema is sufficient to clear your lower bowel and provide the views the endoscopist requires. Please follow the following advice;

- If you are taking iron tablets you should stop taking them **7** days before your procedure.
- Avoid eating foods with seeds for 5 days prior to your procedure.
- Promote a regular bowel habit by drinking plenty of fluids and avoiding constipation.
- If you take laxatives to maintain a regular bowel habit then continue to take these regularly to avoid constipation.
- If you are prone to constipation but do not presently take a laxative consider consulting your pharmacist and taking a laxative to promote a regular bowel habit.
- Take a low fibre diet for 3 days prior to your procedure.

Administration of your Enema

The enema you have been given is a bowel cleanser which you administer yourself 1 ½ hours prior to your flexible sigmoidoscopy. An information leaflet is provided with the enema which should be read before administration and the instructions given followed. If you have any questions prior to administration you can contact your Endoscopy Department for advice. If you are unable to administer the enema yourself please contact your Endoscopy Department to make alternative arrangements before to your appointment date.

- Conquest Hospital Endoscopy Unit – Tel: 0300 131 5297
- Eastbourne DGH Endoscopy Unit – Tel: 0300 131 4595
- Opening hours: Monday to Friday - 08.00 hours to 18:00 hours (except bank holidays)
- Email both departments at esht.endoscopypreassessment@nhs.net

It is advisable to place a folded towel on your bed for you to lie on prior to the administration of the enema fluid. If you are worried about leakage of fluid it is suggested that you place a plastic bag/bin bag under the towel to protect your bed.

Please note that if your bowel is not adequately prepared and the endoscopist does not have clear views of the lining of your colon you may be required to have the procedure repeated following preparation with an oral bowel cleansing preparation.