

The ROYAL MARSDEN

NHS Foundation Trust

Having a flexible cystoscopy

Urology Unit

Patient Information



NHS

Contents

Introduction	1
What is a flexible cystoscopy?	1
What preparation will I need?	3
What should I bring on the day?	3
When you arrive	3
Your flexible cystoscopy procedure	4
What are the benefits and risks?	5
What happens afterwards?	6
When will I know the results?	6
Follow up appointments	7
Your medication	7
How you may feel after your flexible cystoscopy	7
Complications	8
In an emergency	8
Contact details	9
Sources of information and support	9

Introduction

This leaflet tells you about the flexible cystoscopy examination and what to expect. If, after you have read the leaflet you have any questions or concerns, please call the Endoscopy Suite on 020 7811 8328.

Appointments for an endoscopy procedure are in high demand. If you are unable to attend your appointment, please contact the Endoscopy Suite on the above number as soon as possible so that your appointment may be offered to another patient.

When you come into the Endoscopy Suite (ground floor, Granard House Wing) please talk to us about any worries and ask any questions you may have.

Your procedure time in Endoscopy is approximate as some procedures may take longer than expected and emergency procedures need to take priority.

What is a flexible cystoscopy?

Your doctor or nurse practitioner has recommended that you have a flexible cystoscopy to investigate your medical condition. This procedure is used to help make a diagnosis or monitor your progress during or following treatment. If you prefer not to have this procedure, please discuss this with your doctor or nurse practitioner. This is because other methods of examining the bladder, such as a CT scan, may not provide the same information.

A flexible cystoscopy allows the doctor to look directly at the lining of your bladder and urethra (waterpipe). A long flexible telescope (cystoscope), about half the thickness of your index finger, with a bright light at its tip is carefully passed through the urethra (waterpipe) and into the bladder and the image is transmitted onto the video monitor for the clinical practitioner to review.

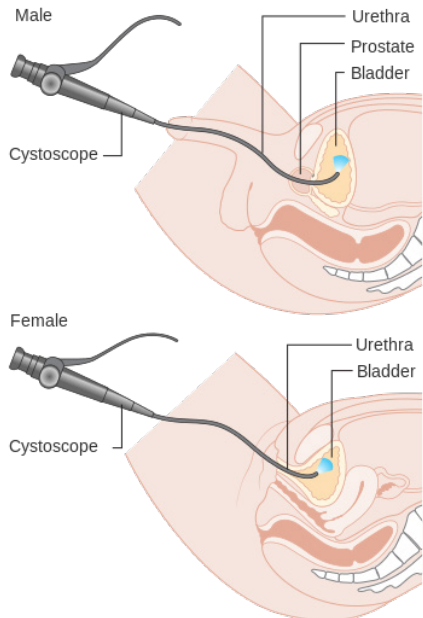


Image 1

Cystoscopist with flexible cystoscope

Diagram 1

Flexible cystoscopy in males and females
(Courtesy of CRUK)



A digital video camera on the cystoscope transmits pictures of the inside of your bladder/urethra to a monitor for the doctor or nurse practitioner to see. They may take a biopsy – this is a sample of the lining of the bladder which can be looked at under a microscope. A small piece of tissue is removed painlessly through the cystoscope, using tiny biopsy forceps.

What preparation will I need?

There is no special preparation for this procedure. Unless you have been told otherwise, you can eat and drink as usual.

If possible, please make sure you arrive with a comfortably full bladder.

What should I bring on the day?

If you normally take medication for high blood pressure, please make sure you take this on the morning of your procedure. Take all your medication as normal unless you have been instructed otherwise by a member of the urology team.

If you use reading glasses, please bring them with you so that you can read the consent form and any other paperwork. You are welcome to bring a book or other reading material.

When you arrive

When you arrive at the hospital, please report to Endoscopy Reception (ground floor, Granard House Wing). If you need wheelchair access, please enter the hospital by the Wallace Wing entrance on Dovehouse Street. A nurse will take you to the admission area. As we have limited space in the department, only one escort or relative will be able to accompany you into the admission area. Refreshments are available in the Mulberry Tree Café on the ground floor adjacent to the Wallace Wing entrance.

In the admission area, a nurse will ask you several questions about your health and current medication, take your blood pressure and pulse and ask you to change into a gown and remove your underwear.

We will also ask you to provide a sample of urine. The sample will be tested for signs of infection which will take a couple of minutes. **If the sample tests positive, there is a possibility that your procedure will have to be cancelled and re-scheduled for another day.** The reason for the cancellation will be explained to you by the clinical practitioner and

follow up treatment, if required, will be given to you before you leave. The urine sample may also be retained and sent to the laboratory for further analysis.

We may ask you to take a dose of antibiotics prior to the procedure (depending on the outcome of the urine test and clinical assessment). The doctor or nurse practitioner will see you before the procedure. This is an opportunity to discuss the test before you sign a consent form and ask any questions you may have. It is important that you understand what is going to happen.

Your flexible cystoscopy procedure

Your flexible cystoscopy will be carried out in the endoscopy procedure room. We will make you comfortable on a hospital bed. A nurse will stay with you throughout the test, explaining what is happening, monitoring your pulse and oxygen levels, level of comfort and assisting the cystoscopist.

The procedure may be unpleasant, and at times uncomfortable. To make you feel more comfortable and relaxed, the doctor or nurse will give you a local anaesthetic in the form of a lubricating gel. This will be gently inserted into the urethra (waterpipe), numbing the area and minimising any discomfort.

The cystoscopist will carefully pass the cystoscope through your urethra (waterpipe) and on into your bladder. Men sometimes find the passage of the cystoscope through the area of the prostate gland uncomfortable, but this will only last a few seconds. In females, there is a small chance the cystoscope may pass in to your vagina – this does not cause harm. During the procedure, some water will be passed down the cystoscope to expand your bladder and provide a clearer view.

The doctor or nurse practitioner may take tissue samples (biopsies) and photographs or video of your bladder, even if it all looks normal. During the procedure, small tissue abnormalities may be painlessly removed. When the examination is finished, the cystoscope is removed quickly and easily. The procedure usually takes between five and 10 minutes.

Your procedure time in endoscopy is approximate as some procedures may take longer than expected and emergency procedures need to take priority.

What are the benefits and risks?

The flexible cystoscopy procedure will help your clinical practitioner to make a diagnosis or may be used to monitor your progress during or following treatment. Flexible cystoscopy is generally safe, but all procedures have some risks, which you should discuss with your doctor or nurse practitioner. These are outlined below.

Very common (greater than 1 in 10)

- Mild burning or bleeding on passing urine for a short period after the cystoscopy
- Biopsy of abnormal areas in bladder (this may require a further procedure under a general anaesthetic).

Common (between 1 in 10 and 1 in 100)

- Infection of the bladder requiring antibiotics
- Temporary insertion of a catheter
- Delayed bleeding requiring removal of clots or further surgery
- Damage to the urethra (waterpipe) causing delayed scar formation
- Difficulty removing the uretric stent (this may require a further procedure under a general anaesthetic)
- In females only, risk of vaginal insertion of cystoscope which may cause some discomfort.

Uncommon (between 1 in 100 and 1 in 1,000)

- Colonisation with MRSA
- Clostridium difficile bowel infection
- MRSA bloodstream infection.

What happens afterwards?

- Once you have passed urine and your paperwork is complete, you can leave as soon as you feel ready.
- As the procedure is performed under local anaesthetic you will be able to travel home without an escort.

When will I know the results?

In many cases your doctor or nurse practitioner will be able to tell you the results of the test straight away.

We will give you a copy of your flexible cystoscopy report before you leave the Endoscopy Suite and will send another copy to your GP or specialist who referred you. However, if a biopsy was taken for examination under the microscope, these results may take ten days to process. Once ready, we will send a copy of the biopsy results to your GP or specialist who referred you.

In some cases the doctor or nurse practitioner will ask you to return for another cystoscopy procedure under a local or a general anaesthetic. Alternatively they may recommend that you return for a surveillance procedure in anything between one and 12 months' time. In this case, we will contact you approximately eight weeks prior to this date and offer you an appointment. **If you have not heard from us within the expected time, please contact the Endoscopy or Urology Departments directly on:**

Endoscopy Suite:

Telephone: 020 7811 8328

Or

Urology Unit PA

Telephone: 020 7811 2437

Please note: All surveillance procedures are individually reviewed eight weeks prior to the planned appointment date in line with current surveillance interval guidelines. If, for any reason, current guidance recommends that your procedure is deferred for a longer period or no longer required, either the Endoscopy Suite or your clinical team will inform you.

Follow up appointments

You may require a follow up appointment with the GP or specialist (who referred you for the procedure). If this is the case you will be informed before you leave the department on the day of your procedure. At this appointment, please ask for the details of any biopsy results or further investigations.

Your medication

We will talk to you about your medication before you go home. It may change, or stay the same, but we will confirm this with you after the procedure.

How you may feel after your flexible cystoscopy

- You will probably feel the need to pass urine more often for up to 48 hours following the procedure.
- You may find that it stings when you pass urine and occasionally there may be some blood in your urine, turning it a pinkish colour. This is normal and drinking extra fluids (two litres/eight cups of water each day) for a few days can help to relieve this, and will also help to reduce the risk of infection.
- If these symptoms persist for more than 48 hours, you should contact your GP as you may have a urine infection.

Complications

Complications are uncommon, however you should seek medical help immediately if you experience any of the following:

- Unable to pass urine
- Severe abdominal pain or abdominal swelling
- Profuse or heavy bleeding in your urine
- Fever (above 38°C) and/or chills.

If you experience any of these complications, please call The Royal Marsden Macmillan Hotline (see details on page 9).

In an emergency

Telephone your GP surgery (or your GP out of hours service), call NHS 111 or else go to your nearest A&E (Accident and Emergency). After you have been seen, please inform the Endoscopy Suite at The Royal Marsden.

Contact details

For routine advice, contact the Endoscopy Unit

Telephone: **020 7811 8328** (Monday to Friday 8am–5pm)

If we are unable to take your call, please leave a message. Answerphone messages will be collected twice daily, Monday to Friday and a member of the Endoscopy Unit will return your call.

Sources of information and support

You can visit the Help Centre Monday to Friday between 9.30am and 4.30pm. Staff are based at both Chelsea and Sutton and will be available to guide you through the information and offer you any advice and support you may need.

You may phone the help centre on **0800 783 7176** (freephone). An answerphone service is available outside the opening hours.

Alternatively you can email the PALS team at *patientcentre@rmh.nhs.uk*

If you would like this information leaflet in a different format, please contact the Patient Advice and Liaison Service on **0800 783 7176** or talk to the clinical staff responsible for your care.

The Royal Marsden Macmillan Hotline: 020 8915 6899

You can ring the Hotline 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Call us straight away if you are feeling unwell or are worried about the side effects of cancer treatments.

This service provides specialist advice and support to all Royal Marsden patients, as well as to their carers, and both hospital and community-based doctors and nurses caring for Royal Marsden patients.

For further information, please visit The Royal Marsden website: *www.royalmarsden.nhs.uk/your-care/support-services/royal-marsden-macmillan-hotline*

Notes and questions

References

This booklet is evidence based wherever the appropriate evidence is available, and represents an accumulation of expert opinion and professional interpretation.

Details of the references used in writing this booklet are available on request from:

The Royal Marsden Help Centre

Freephone: 0800 783 7176

Email: patientcentre@rmh.nhs.uk

No conflicts of interest were declared in the production of this booklet.

Should you require information in an alternative format, please contact The Royal Marsden Help Centre.

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