

You have been scheduled for a flexible sigmoidoscopy at UNC Health Care. Please read the following information carefully.

What is a flexible sigmoidoscopy?

The purpose of a flexible sigmoidoscopy is to look inside the sigmoid colon and rectum. The doctor will pass a flexible tube that has a small camera and headlight to see the inside of your colon on a TV monitor. The doctor can take biopsies of any abnormal areas, and can also remove polyps. Sometimes this test is done with sedative medications.

How to prepare for a flexible sigmoidoscopy?

One week before the flexible sigmoidoscopy:

- You should stop taking non-steroidal anti-inflammatory (NSAID) medications, such as ibuprofen, Motrin, Aleve, Advil, and Naproxen.
- You may continue to take aspirin if your doctor recommended you ordinarily take it. If no doctor has ever recommended aspirin then you should not take any aspirin starting 7 days before the procedure.
- If you take Plavix (Clopidigrel), Coumadin (Warfarin), or other blood thinning/anticoagulation medicines then you should discuss what to do with your doctor. Our prep nurse (984-974-5050) will help coordinate this.
- Purchase two- 64 ounce bottles of Gatorade (do not purchase a red or purple colored flavor and purchase Pedialyte if you have diabetes), as well as an 8.3 ounce bottle (14 day supply) of Miralax or a generic equivalent of this medication. This is available without a prescription.

One day before the flexible sigmoidoscopy:

- *What to eat:* You must not eat any solid foods the day before your flexible sigmoidoscopy. You may only consume clear liquids, which include clear broth, Jell-O, and popsicles.
- *What to drink:* You must drink only clear liquids for breakfast, lunch, and dinner. Be sure to drink plenty of liquids throughout the day, in addition to what is instructed in your bowel prep. Liquids you CAN drink include water, black coffee, tea, apple juice, soda pop, club soda, and sports drinks such as Gatorade (avoid red-colored). Liquids you can NOT drink include milk, orange/pineapple juice, coffee with cream, and alcohol.
- *Taking your "bowel prep":* For your procedure we recommend a "split prep", which means you will take one half of the prep the evening before the test starting at 6:00pm, and the other half the day of the test. Mix half of the Miralax powder (or generic equivalent) with one 64 ounce bottles of chilled Gatorade (if diabetic use Pedialyte) and shake well. Drink one 8 ounce glass of this solution every 15 minutes until the 64 ounce bottle is completed. After you are done you can ONLY consume clear liquids. We recommend drinking 8-16 ounce glasses of clear liquid to help prevent dehydration. Do NOT have any solid food until after the flexible sigmoidoscopy is completed.

- *Medications:* If you have diabetes we recommend you take only one-half the dose of long acting insulin (e.g., Lantus) the night before the flexible sigmoidoscopy.

The day of the flexible sigmoidoscopy:

- *What to eat:* you must not eat any foods, suck candy, or chew gum until AFTER the flexible sigmoidoscopy is over.
- *What to drink:* You may drink water, black coffee (without sugar, milk or cream), apple juice, soda pop, or club soda. Stop drinking these liquids at least 3 hours before the sigmoidoscopy.
- *Medications:* do NOT take any medication for diabetes or diuretics (such as lasix/furosemide) You may take your other medications with a small amount of liquid up to four hours before the sigmoidoscopy.
- *Taking your "bowel prep":* You should have already completed one half of the Miralax prep the night before the procedure. You will take the prep just as you had done the night before. Mix the other half of the Miralax with the other 64 ounce bottle of chilled Gatorade. Then drink one 8 ounce glass of this solution every 15 minutes until completed. **You must take the second half of your prep starting at least 4 hours before the time your flexible sigmoidoscopy is scheduled, and finish it no later than 2 hours before your procedure time, even if that means having to get up very early.** For example, if your flexible sigmoidoscopy is schedule for 1:00pm then take the second part of your prep at 9:00am and finish by 11:00 AM the morning of your flexible sigmoidoscopy. If your flexible sigmoidoscopy is scheduled for 9:00AM then take the second part of you prep at 5:00 AM and finish by 7:00 AM the morning of your flexible sigmoidoscopy. We know it is hard to get up this early, but it is very important to take the second part of your prep 4 hours before your flexible sigmoidoscopy in order to get the best results.
- **After you complete the prep do not take any other liquid or food. Arrive 60 minutes before your scheduled appointment time accompanied by an adult who can drive you home after the test. Your driver is required to stay on the premises until you are ready to go home after the procedure.**
- If you choose to have the sigmoidoscopy performed without sedative medications you may come alone. **If you choose to have the sigmoidoscopy performed with sedative medications then you must be accompanied by an adult who can drive you home after the test.** The exam will not be done unless a person at least 18 years old comes with you and stays in the GI Procedure waiting room during the exam.
- You should expect to spend at least 4 hours in our procedures unit, longer if you are scheduled to have an additional test done on the same day.

After your flexible sigmoidoscopy

After the sigmoidoscopy is completed we will observe you in a recovery area for approximately 30 minutes. Before you leave, the doctor will explain the results of the exam, and also give you a report and instructions.

If you received sedative medications then the person who came with you must sign you out and drive you home. You cannot drive or go back to work for at least 12 hours.

If you were not given medication for sedation, you will be able to walk, drive or take a van, bus or taxi after the exam.

If you have any questions or need to reschedule your exam please call 984-974-5050. If you have an urgent question between 4:00PM -7:30 AM please page the GI fellow on call at 984-974-1000.