



KAISER PERMANENTE MEDICAL CENTER

Department of Medicine, Gastroenterology
SAN RAFAEL and PETALUMA MEDICAL OFFICES

Sigmoidoscopy Exam

(Instructions for those WITHOUT kidney disease, heart failure or age>80)

You have been referred to the Gastroenterology department for a sigmoidoscopy.

To schedule an appointment in San Rafael:	To schedule an appointment in Petaluma:
San Rafael Medical Offices 99 Montecillo Road, San Rafael Medical Office Building One, 5th Floor Gastroenterology Department Park in Lot "D"	Petaluma Medical Offices 3900 Lakeville Hwy. (at Pine View Way) Medical Office Building Two, 2nd Floor Surgery Subspecialties/Gastroenterology Department
(415) 444-2598	(707) 765-3446
For Saturday and evening appointments, please register first on the 3 rd floor, Urgent Care, then proceed to the 5 th floor.	

Sigmoidoscopy is a test that allows a physician or endoscopy nurse to examine the lining of the rectum and lower colon with a small camera attached to a flexible tube. The purpose of this exam is to screen for colon cancer and pre-cancerous colon polyps and to identify diseases or other problems that may be causing you lower gastrointestinal symptoms.

What are the benefits of a flexible sigmoidoscopy?

- Reducing the risk of colorectal cancer by removing polyps (growths in the colon that may become cancer).
- Identifying cancer at an early stage when it is more easily treated; and
- Identifying diseases or other problems that may be causing you lower gastrointestinal symptoms.

No medical or surgical procedure is without risk, but the risks of a flex sig are very low. These include bleeding or a puncture (perforation) of the colon that may require surgery to repair (this happens in 1 out of 10,000 examinations) and a chance that the sigmoidoscopist will miss an important finding (this happens less than 5% of the time).

PREPARATION FOR SIGMOIDOSCOPY

For the best possible examination, the lower colon must be cleansed of stool. Please follow these instructions:

1. Purchase (at any drug store or pharmacy):
 - a. **TWO** Fleet "Ready to use enemas" (For bowel cleansing) containing sodium phosphates (**NOT** the mineral oil type).
 - b. **ONE** 10 oz. bottle of Magnesium Citrate.

2. **The day prior to the exam at 5PM**, drink the entire bottle of Magnesium Citrate. If you eat dinner, eat a light meal such as soup. That evening/night you may have several loose bowel movements. This is normal. Be sure to drink at least **six** 8-ounce glasses of water during the day before the exam as well to stay hydrated.

3. **The day of your procedure**, drink only clear liquids (e.g. broth, clear juices, JELL-O, or water). Take your normal medications with a glass of water unless otherwise instructed.

4. **Two hours before your appointment**, begin administering the first enema following the instructions on the box. Take one enema, hold it as long as possible, expel it, then wait 10 minutes and take the second enema in the same manner. Please disregard the statement on the box stating that you can only take one enema, we are recommending 2 for best results.

5. **Do not have anything** to eat or drink in the 2 hours between starting the enemas and your sigmoidoscopy exam.

What will I experience during a flexible sigmoidoscopy?

The sigmoidoscopist will examine your anus with a gloved finger and some lubricant. He or she will then insert the flexible videoscope, a slender tube with a camera at the end, into your anus, then gradually move the scope forward into your lower bowel. The picture from the scope will appear on a video screen. The sigmoidoscopist may perform a biopsy or remove small polyps (growths) if any are present. Some air will be introduced to inflate the bowel. You will feel some pressure from the air. It may feel as if you have to have a bowel movement – this is a normal feeling. You may also experience some bloating or cramping during the exam, but that will disappear once the scope is removed. You will be able to pass the air out of the colon in the bathroom afterward. The exam takes no more than 5 to 10 minutes. You will be given the result immediately after the exam is complete. If a biopsy is performed, results are usually available in 7-14 days.