

# Flexible Cystoscopy – A Guide to the Test

**Endoscopy Department  
Clinical Support Services**

**This leaflet has been designed to give you important information about your condition / procedure, and to answer some common queries you may have.**



# Information for patients and visitors

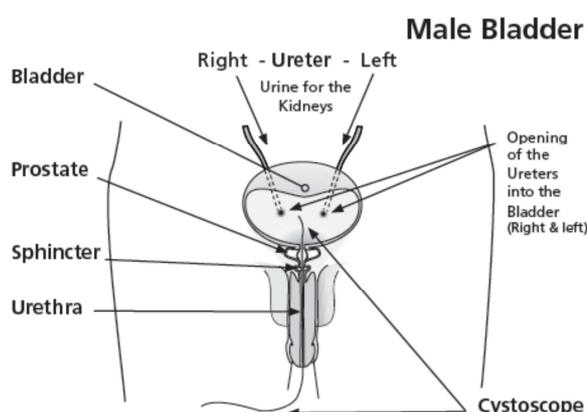
## Introduction

### What is a Flexible Cystoscopy?

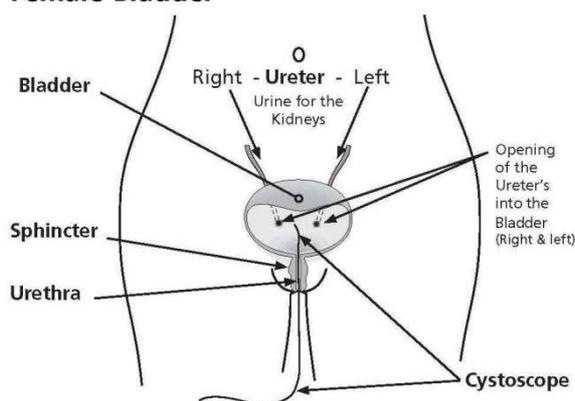
A flexible cystoscopy is a test that allows the doctor to look directly at the lining of the bladder, from the opening of the urethra.

During the procedure a thin flexible 'fibre-optic' tube called a cystoscope is passed through the urethra (opening to the bladder). The end of the cystoscope contains a light and conveys images to a viewing screen allowing the doctor a clear view of the bladder lining. As well as looking at the lining, biopsies (small pieces of tissue samples – for examination under microscope) can be taken.

The test is usually carried out to investigate bladder symptoms such as blood apparent in urine, recurrent urine infections, abdominal pain or abnormalities revealed by other investigations.



### Female Bladder



# Information for patients and visitors

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## What do I need to know before admission?

You will be asked to attend the Endoscopy Unit. You can expect to be in the Unit between 1 and 2 hours. Please may we request that you do not come to the unit before your appointment time.

Prescribed medication can be taken as normal on the day of your Cystoscopy. There is also no need to fast for the procedure, so please eat and drink as normal.

## What happens on admission?

Once you have arrived at the Unit a nurse will complete an admission document with all your personal details. She will explain the procedure to you, and inform you of the potential risks and complications of the flexible cystoscopy and also answer any questions you may have. The nurse or Endoscopist will then ask you to sign the consent form for the procedure (once you have read it carefully and understood it in full).

You may be asked to provide a sample of urine, which will be sent to the pathology department after the cystoscopy. If any abnormalities are found you will be notified by the urology secretaries.

You will be taken into a changing room and supplied with a gown and dressing gown for you to change into. You need to keep your clothes with you and you will be provided with a bag to put them in.

There will be a member of staff with you throughout the procedure.

## Cancellations or Delays

Please be aware that in some circumstances your procedure may have to be delayed or cancelled at short notice. If this occurs we apologise for any inconvenience caused and will aim to reschedule your appointment as soon as possible.

## What happens during the Flexible Cystoscopy?

You will be taken to an examination room for the procedure. The nurses will help you lay down in the correct position on a couch, resting on your back. A nurse will stay with you throughout the test.

The procedure will be carried out as follows:

1. The genital area is washed with an antiseptic lotion. Then some local anaesthetic jelly is inserted into the urethra (this might sting a little). It acts as a lubricant as well as numbing the area. The cystoscope is then inserted into the urethra and into the bladder. Fluid attached to the cystoscope is released into the bladder to expand it; this is to give the doctor a clear view of the internal surface.
2. If the doctor finds any change in any tissue a tiny piece may be removed (biopsy) using instruments passed through the cystoscope. Any samples of tissues removed are sent to the laboratory for specialist examination.



## Information for patients and visitors

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The procedure lasts from 5 to 10 minutes. During the procedure you may feel as if you need to pass urine. Some patients may find the procedure uncomfortable, however we take as many precautions as possible to minimise any discomfort.

### What happens after the Flexible Cystoscopy?

You will need to pass urine as soon as the procedure is finished. You can then get changed and the nurse will organise a drink for you.

You may find that you pass blood stained urine initially and that it stings when you go to the toilet. It is important that you drink following the procedure to flush out your bladder. The nursing staff will generally assess how you have recovered from the procedure. If you feel unwell at all please let the staff know.

If you are unable to pass urine you will be asked to stay in the Endoscopy Unit until you can. Once ready to leave the nurse will speak to you about your cystoscopy, answer any questions you have, and will give you a copy of your discharge letter.

### Discharge Advice

Drink plenty of fluids – at least 3 pints of water or squash. Avoid caffeine (coffee, tea, cocoa, colas) and alcohol for 2 days.

Having urine that is pink in colour as well as passing some small clots is normal following this procedure. As you urinate more, your urine will return to normal.

Carry on with normal activities according to how you feel. Avoid strenuous physical activity especially heavy lifting.

**Pain** – if you experience discomfort following your cystoscopy simple analgesia like paracetamol is recommended.

It is normal to have a small amount of bleeding (especially if you have had biopsies taken) and burning the first few times you pass urine however this should settle quite quickly especially if you drink plenty.

### Benefits

The procedure enables us to have a direct vision of the bladder and the urethra, to aid diagnosis and treatment.

### Risks

It is very important that you are aware of the potential risks and complications of flexible cystoscopy before giving your consent to the procedure. These include:

- **Internal Bleeding (Haemorrhage)**

This may occur at the site of a biopsy. The bleeding is usually resolved without any treatment but in a minority of cases may be serious. If you pass large clots of blood or if your urine is bright red you must seek medical advice.



## Information for patients and visitors

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- **Infection**

This may happen to some patients and is partly why we ask for a urine sample prior to the procedure. All precautions possible are taken to prevent infection. If you develop a fever or have persistent pain and burning when passing urine you must seek medical advice. It is also important to remember that if you pass small amounts of urine frequently this may be a sign of infection and therefore you should consult your General Practitioner (GP).

- **Urine Retention**

This is the inability to pass urine. If this occurs you must seek medical advice.

- **Perforation**

If you develop severe lower abdominal pain and / or your tummy becomes noticeably more bloated / swollen (distended) you must seek medical advice. This can be a potentially serious complication, although it usually settles without surgery being necessary.

**Every effort is made to reduce the risk of these complications occurring.** If you are concerned about any of these risks and complications, please discuss this with the consultant or member of their staff **before** the procedure.

### Alternatives

It may be essential to have a cystoscopy in order to diagnose some bladder conditions. The cystoscope enables the doctor to view parts of the urethra and bladder that tend not to show up well on X-rays.

In certain circumstances it may be possible to undertake another form of cystoscopy, using a rigid rather than a flexible instrument. However this is used for giving treatment to the bladder and urinary tract rather than for a diagnostic investigation. This type of procedure would be done under a general anaesthetic.

### Reference Section

#### Sources of Further Information / Support

##### Cancer BACUP

3 Bath Place,  
Rivington Street,  
London,  
EC2A 3JR

Tel: 020 7696 9003 or Freephone 0800 181199

Fax: 020 7696 9002

[www.cancerbacup.org.uk](http://www.cancerbacup.org.uk)



## Information for patients and visitors

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### Contact Details for Further Information

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact the Endoscopy Unit:

- **The Endoscopy Unit at Diana Princess of Wales**

**Normal Hours:** 8am-7pm Monday to Friday and 8am-6pm Saturday

**Endoscopy Pre-assessment Nurse: 03033 304343**

Telephone the Unit direct on **03033 303353** between the hours of 8am until 6pm, Monday until Friday

Or Telephone Diana, Princess of Wales Hospital, Grimsby on **03033 306999** and ask for the Endoscopy Unit

**Out of Hours:**

**After 6pm contact Ward B4** via the main switchboard on: **03033 302221** (Out of hours 6pm to 8am).

- **The Endoscopy Suite at Scunthorpe General Hospital**

**Normal Hours:** 8am-6pm Monday to Friday and 8am-6pm Saturday

Telephone the Unit direct on **03033 302186**

Or Telephone Scunthorpe General Hospital **03033 302221** and ask for the Endoscopy Unit

**Out of Hours:**

**After 6pm contact your G.P. or phone the G.P. emergency Centre (01724) 290444**

- **Department of General Surgery and Endoscopy, Goole Hospital**

Telephone **03033 304119** or **03033 304123**

### Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)

The Patient Advice and Liaison Service offers confidential advice, support and information on any health related matters.

If you have a comment, concern, complaint or compliment about the care or service you have received from the Trust you can contact the PALS team as follows:

Telephone: 03033 306518

Email: [nlg-tr.PALS@nhs.net](mailto:nlg-tr.PALS@nhs.net)

There are also offices at both the Diana Princess of Wales Hospital (near the main entrance) and Scunthorpe General Hospital (on the C Floor, near the outpatient department), should you wish to visit.

**Please note: PALS should not be contacted for clinical advice relating to the content of this leaflet. The service should be contacted directly in the first instance.**



# Information for patients and visitors

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## Confidentiality and How We Use Data

Personal information on NHS patients is collected and recorded within paper and electronic formats primarily to support high quality care that is safe and effective. To do this, information is also used to support quality improvement activities, investigate any concerns you may raise as well as to support and understand NHS performance. All NHS staff have a legal duty to keep information about you confidential.

Information will only ever be shared with people who have a genuine need for it. Other circumstances where information may be shared include administrative teams to plan future care needed, commissioners of Trust services, other NHS or social care providers and in some cases voluntary sector providers.

## Zero Tolerance - Violent, Threatening and Abusive Behaviour

The Trust and its staff are committed to providing high quality care to patients within the department. However, we wish to advise all patients / visitors that the following inappropriate behaviour will not be tolerated:

- Swearing
- Threatening / abusive behaviour
- Verbal / physical abuse

The Trust reserves the right to withdraw from treating patients who are threatening / abusive / violent and ensuring the removal of those persons from the premises.

All acts of criminal violence and aggression will be notified to the Police immediately.

## Risk Management Strategy

The Trust welcomes comments and suggestions from patients and visitors that could help to reduce risk.

Perhaps you have experienced something whilst in hospital, whilst attending as an outpatient or as a visitor and you felt at risk.

Please tell a member of staff on the ward or in the department you are attending / visiting.

## Moving & Handling

The Trust operates a Minimal Lifting Policy, which in essence means patients are only ever lifted by nursing staff in an emergency situation.

Patients are always encouraged to help themselves as much as possible when mobilising, and if unable to do so, equipment may be used to assist in their safe transfer.

If you have any questions regarding moving and handling of patients within the Trust, please speak to a member of staff in the ward or department you are visiting.



# Information for patients and visitors

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## Northern Lincolnshire and Goole NHS Foundation Trust

Diana Princess of Wales Hospital  
Scartho Road  
Grimsby  
DN33 2BA

Scunthorpe General Hospital  
Cliff Gardens  
Scunthorpe  
DN15 7BH

Goole & District Hospital  
Woodland Avenue  
Goole  
DN14 6RX

03033 306999

[www.nlg.nhs.uk](http://www.nlg.nhs.uk)

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