

There is NO need to fast for this procedure.

ALL ABOUT FLEXIBLE CYSTOSCOPY

A flexible cystoscopy is an examination of the inside of the bladder using a thin, flexible, tube-like telescope called a cystoscope. This instrument is carefully passed up the urethra (the tube that passes urine out of the body) and into the bladder.

Why have a cystoscopy?

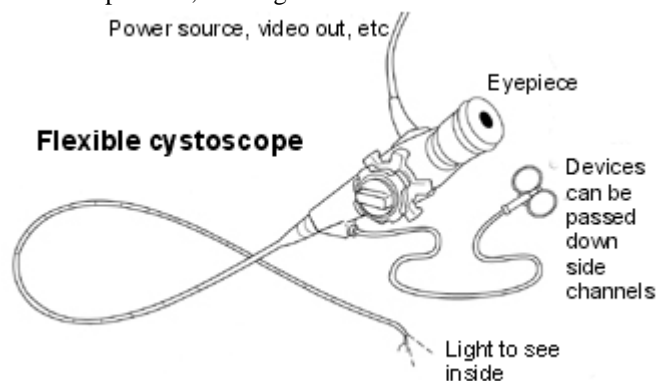
Flexible cystoscopy is useful for finding out what is causing symptoms such as blood in the urine or difficulties with urination. It is also used as a check-up for certain bladder conditions. It enables Mr Davies to inspect the bladder lining very closely for abnormal growths, bulges, ulcers or stones. During the procedure, Mr Davies may also take a biopsy – a small sample of the lining of the bladder – for examination in the laboratory.

What are the alternatives?

It may be essential to have a cystoscopy in order to diagnose some bladder conditions. Flexible cystoscopy enables Mr Davies to view parts of the urethra and bladder that tend not to show well on x-rays.

The operation

Flexible cystoscopy is performed as an outpatient or day case (with no overnight stay in hospital) and usually only takes about five minutes to perform, although 45 minutes should be allowed for the appointment. The procedure is performed with a nurse present throughout to provide care and reassurance.



You will be asked to empty the bladder just before having the procedure. The cystoscopy is performed under local anaesthetic, which is given in the form of a gel placed into the opening of the urethra. The anaesthetic jelly is squeezed into the urethra using a syringe *without* a needle. You will be awake but feel no pain, although there may be some moments of discomfort.

The cystoscope will then be carefully passed into the urethra. Men may be asked to try and pass urine while the cystoscope is being inserted. This is simply to help relax the muscles – no urine will actually be passed.

Once the end of the cystoscope is in the bladder, sterile water will be passed through it to fill the bladder up and make the whole of the lining visible. A tiny light and lens on the cystoscope enable Mr Davies to see any abnormal growths or disease. You may watch the cystoscopy if you wish by looking at the video monitor screen

If necessary, Mr Davies will take a biopsy of the bladder lining for analysis, using tiny instruments that can be passed inside the cystoscope. This procedure is quick and causes only minor transient discomfort.

After the examination, the cystoscope is removed quickly and easily. As the bladder will be full of water, it will probably be necessary to pass urine again once the procedure is finished. You may be asked to pass urine into a machine that accurately measures your flow rate then undergo a painless ultrasound examination of the bladder to assess the adequacy of your bladder emptying.

You will be told the results of the flexible cystoscopy at the time of the examination.

What to expect afterwards

Most people feel ready to go home after a short rest.

Most people are able to resume normal activities following the procedure.

It is normal to experience mild stinging on passing urine for a day or two after this procedure. Drinking plenty of water can help this, and can also prevent the development of infection or inflammation. Alkalinising the urine using Ural or Citravescent sachets (available without a prescription from your chemist) will also help. Drink enough to keep the urine colour light.

You may notice some blood in the urine and if this occurs then you should drink a little extra water to keep it flushed out. However, it is important to contact Mr Davies if any of the following occur:

- The bleeding does not seem to have slowed down after 24 hours
- It becomes difficult to pass urine
- There are any signs of infection such as a high temperature, pain or persistent burning on passing urine

Deciding to have a cystoscopy

Cystoscopy is a commonly performed and generally very safe procedure. However, in order to give informed consent, anyone deciding whether or not to have this procedure needs to be aware of the possible side effects and the risk of complications.

Side-effects

Side-effects are the unwanted but usually mild and temporary effects of a successful procedure. For cystoscopy, they may include:

- A small amount of discomfort after the procedure – this will settle in a few hours
- Temporary swelling of the urethra after the procedure causing temporary bladder blockage – this should not last long, but a narrow tube (catheter) may need to be temporarily left in the bladder to drain urine until the swelling goes down
- A stinging sensation when passing urine for a couple of days after the procedure
- A small amount of blood in the urine – this is quite normal, especially if a biopsy is taken, and should clear up gradually within 48 hours

Complications

Complications are unexpected problems that can occur during or after the procedure. Most people are not affected. However, the possible complications of a cystoscopy include:

- Development of a urinary tract infection or inflammation, requiring treatment with antibiotics
- Very rarely, the urethra or bladder may be damaged. This can lead to bleeding and infection, which may require treatment with medicines or surgery
- In a few cases, the cystoscopy is not successful and has to be repeated

The chance of complications depends on the exact type of procedure that is being performed and other factors such as the person's general health.