

# **Your Cystoscopy**

## **A guide for patients and carers**

### **Having a flexible cystoscopy**

It has been recommended that you have an internal examination of your bladder. This is called a flexible cystoscopy. This leaflet aims to answer some of the questions you may want to ask before the examination.

### **What is a cystoscopy?**

When you have a urinary problem (waterworks), your doctor may use a cystoscope to see the inside of your bladder and urinary tract (urethra).

The cystoscope is a thin tube with a light at the tip. It has lenses like a telescope or microscope, which let the doctor look closely at the inside of the urinary tract up to the bladder.

### **Where do I go for the cystoscopy?**

Flexible cystoscopies take place in the Ambulatory Treatment Centre (ATC), on the first floor at the Royal Free Hospital. Please arrive at the time indicated on your appointment letter, which you should bring with you. This is not the time of your procedure as some preparation is necessary once you have arrived.

### **Is there anything I need to do before the cystoscopy?**

No special preparation is needed at all. On the day of the investigation you can eat and drink as normal.

**PLEASE COME WITH A FULL BLADDER** (if possible)

### **How long will I be in hospital?**

You will be in the hospital for the morning.

### **What happens when I arrive?**

When you arrive at the ATC you will need to book in at reception where they will check your details.

The nurse will ask you a few simple questions about your health and explain the examination to you. You will then be asked to change into a gown. You may be asked to carry out a urine flow test. This involves passing urine into a machine that measures the strength of your urine flow. After this procedure you will have a bladder ultrasound scan. This is when a small ultrasound probe is passed over your abdomen and measures how much urine is left in your bladder. This is quick and painless.

***Please bring along any medicines or tablets that you are taking.***

If you have any worries or questions at this stage do not be afraid to ask. We want you to be as relaxed as possible and will not mind answering your questions.

### **What happens to me during the cystoscopy?**

We will take you into the examination room. The doctor/nurse specialist who is going to carry out the examination will meet you. He or she will ask if you have any questions and ask you to sign a form giving your consent. A nurse will stay with you throughout the test.

Although you do not need a general anaesthetic for flexible cystoscopy, the urethra needs to be prepared with anaesthetic jelly; this is squeezed gently into it from a tube or syringe. The jelly numbs the urethra and lubricates it. It may also contain an antiseptic.

### **Test procedure**

Before the procedure you may be given antibiotic tablets as a precaution to help prevent infection. The test will only take a few minutes to complete.

The doctor/nurse specialist will gently insert the tip of the cystoscope into your urethra and slowly glide it up into the bladder. Relaxing your pelvic muscles will help make this part of the test easier. A sterile liquid (water or saline) will flow through the

cystoscope to fill your bladder slowly and to stretch it so that the doctor has a better view of the bladder. You may feel some discomfort and the urge to urinate. You will be able to empty your bladder as soon as the examination is over.

### **When will I know the results?**

The findings and plans for any further treatment will be discussed with you after the test.

### **Could there be a problem after having this test?**

Most patients have no trouble after a flexible cystoscopy. You may have a mild burning feeling when you urinate, so drinking extra water can help.

You may have a little bleeding. This usually clears within 2-3 days if you drink plenty of water.

An occasional problem after a flexible cystoscopy is a water infection. If you have a temperature, pain, persistent burning or bleeding, contact your family doctor (GP). If out of hours contact your local Accident & Emergency department.

### **Will I need a further appointment?**

Depending on the cystoscopy findings you may be asked to attend a follow-up appointment. The appointment date and time may be given to you before you go home or an appointment letter will be sent to you in the post.

**Before you go home**

You will be asked to stay in ATC until you have passed urine. When you have passed urine please tell one of the nurses.

A discharge letter and post-cystoscopy information letter will be given to you before you go home.

**If you would like a large print or audio version of this information, please ask a member of staff.**