

Proctoscopy

What Is A Proctoscopy?

A proctoscopy is a simple but effective medical procedure that allows your consultant to examine the inside of your anal canal and rectum using a short, rigid tube called a proctoscope. This examination helps diagnose various conditions affecting the lower part of your bowel, particularly those related to rectal bleeding, pain, or changes in bowel habits.

Why Is A Proctoscopy Performed?

A proctoscopy is commonly used to investigate rectal and anal symptoms such as:

- **Rectal bleeding**
- **Persistent diarrhoea or constipation**
- **Unexplained anal or rectal pain**
- **Anal itching or irritation**
- **Mucus discharge from the rectum**

This procedure can help diagnose common anorectal conditions, including:

- **Haemorrhoids (piles)** - Swollen blood vessels in the anal canal
- **Anal fissures** - Small tears in the anal lining
- **Rectal polyps** - Small growths in the rectum that may need removal
- **Inflammation or infections** - Indicative of underlying conditions such as proctitis or colitis

Early diagnosis through proctoscopy ensures timely treatment and helps prevent complications.

What Does Proctoscopy Involve?

A proctoscopy is a straightforward, quick procedure typically performed in an outpatient setting. Here's what to expect:

- **Positioning** – You will be asked to lie on your left side with your knees drawn up to your chest
- **Digital rectal examination** – Before using the proctoscope, the consultant will gently insert a lubricated, gloved finger into your anus to check for abnormalities
- **Insertion of the proctoscope** – A lubricated proctoscope is then carefully inserted into the anal canal
- **Inspection** – The consultant examines the lining of your anal canal and rectum, looking for signs of swelling, irritation, polyps, or bleeding
- **Biopsy collection** – If needed, small tissue samples (biopsies) may be taken for further analysis

The entire procedure usually takes just a few minutes and is well-tolerated by most patients.

Do You Need Any Preparation Beforehand?

Unlike other bowel investigations, proctoscopy requires minimal preparation. However, for a clear view of the rectum, your consultant may advise:

- Using a suppository or enema shortly before the procedure to clear the lower bowel
- Avoiding heavy meals just before your appointment
- Following any additional specific instructions provided by your consultant

You do not need to follow a fasting period or take strong bowel-clearing laxatives, as required for colonoscopy or flexible sigmoidoscopy.

Is A Proctoscopy Safe?

A proctoscopy is a very safe and commonly performed procedure. However, like any medical test, there are some minor risks:

- **Mild discomfort** - Some patients experience a feeling of pressure or urgency, but this usually resolves quickly
- **Minor bleeding** - If a biopsy is taken, small amounts of blood may be seen, which should stop on its own
- **Rare risk of infection** - Proper hygiene and sterile instruments minimise this risk

If you experience severe pain, heavy bleeding, or signs of infection (fever, persistent discomfort) after the procedure, seek medical advice immediately.

What Happens After A Proctoscopy?

- You can return to normal activities immediately after the procedure
- If biopsies were taken, your consultant will discuss the results with you once they are processed
- Any findings that require further tests or treatment options will be explained during your follow-up consultation

Why Choose The Midlands Bowel Clinic?

At Midlands Bowel Clinic, we provide expert care using state-of-the-art diagnostic tools. Our dedicated colorectal specialists offer:

- **Expertise** - Highly experienced consultants with a proven track record in diagnosing and treating bowel conditions
- **Advanced technology** - We use the latest diagnostic equipment for accurate and early detection
- **Patient-centred approach** - We prioritise your comfort and concerns, ensuring a stress-free experience
- **Prompt diagnosis and treatment** - We provide quick appointments and same-day procedures where possible

Choosing the Midlands Bowel Clinic ensures you receive expert care with minimal waiting times, so you can focus on your health with confidence.

Contact Us

If you're experiencing symptoms such as rectal bleeding, persistent bowel habit changes, or unexplained anal discomfort, don't hesitate to reach out to us. Early evaluation can lead to timely diagnosis and treatment.