Having a cystoscopy in the outpatient clinic

We have given you this factsheet because your doctor has recommended that you have a cystoscopy. We hope it will help to answer some of the questions you may have.

What is a cystoscopy?
A cystoscopy is an examination in which we look at the inside of your bladder using a narrow flexible or rigid tube (telescope) called a cystoscope.

The procedure is used to investigate the cause of urinary symptoms such as urgency, frequency, recurrent urine infections, poor urinary flow and blood in the urine. The cystoscopy should allow us to make an accurate diagnosis and help your specialist to decide on the best treatment plan for you.

What does the procedure involve?
The cystoscopy usually takes 10 to 15 minutes. You will have the procedure under local anaesthetic in an outpatient clinic specialising in minor procedures (ambulatory gynaecology unit). This means you will be able to go home the same day.

Once you are comfortable on the examination couch, the specialist performing the procedure will insert a local anaesthetic gel into your urethra (waterpipe) and leave it in place for a few minutes. This makes the insertion of the cystoscope as comfortable as possible.

The cystoscope is then inserted into your urethra (waterpipe) and passed into the bladder. Once in place, we run sterile water slowly into your bladder so that we can inspect the bladder lining. This may make you feel like you need to pass water. If at any time you are too uncomfortable please let a member of staff know. A nurse will be with you throughout the procedure. Once the procedure is completed we will remove the cystoscope and you will be able to sit up.

What are the risks?
Cystoscopy is not a very invasive procedure but as with any procedure, there may occasionally be complications.

Risks include:
- perforation of the bladder wall
- infection
- excessive bleeding
- inability to pass urine

Please speak to your specialist if you would like more information about these risks.

What should I expect after the procedure?
After the procedure we will take you to a room where you can recover and get dressed. You will be able to go home once you have passed urine. Sometimes we may ask you to have a scan of your bladder to ensure you are fully emptying your bladder. This will be done in the department by one of the nursing staff.

You may notice your urine contains blood and you have some discomfort when passing urine. This will settle within a couple of days. Simple pain relief such as paracetamol will help. If you have increasingly blood-
stained urine, bladder pain or a burning sensation when you pass urine, please contact your GP as you may have an infection.

In the 24 hours after the procedure, drink extra fluids (at least 1 to 2 litres of water)

You can drive and work as normal after your procedure. We do advise you may want someone to drive you home after the appointment in case you feel unwell. This could be a relative or friend.

**What do I need to do before my appointment?**

Before your appointment, you may eat and drink as normal and take any regular medication. If you are taking any medication to thin your blood please contact us so that we can advise.

At least seven days before your appointment ask your GP to test your urine for infection and to treat you with antibiotics if necessary.

When you come in for the procedure please bring a dressing gown with you.

**Follow up**

Your specialist will discuss any findings with you and make recommendations for any further investigations or treatment. We will send you any further appointments that may be needed.

**Contact us**

If you need any further information or have any concerns please contact us using the contact details below.

**Ambulatory gynaecology unit**

Telephone: 023 8120 6034

Monday to Friday, 8.30am to 4pm

**Urogynaecology department**

Telephone: 023 8120 6016

Monday to Friday, 8am to 5pm

**Bramshaw women's unit**

Telephone: 023 8120 6035

Evenings and weekends

If you need a translation of this document, an interpreter or a version in large print, Braille or on audio tape, please telephone 023 8120 4688 for help.