

Anoscopy

What it is and What to Expect

This handout explains what an anoscopy is, what happens during the procedure, what to expect after it, and when to contact your care team.

What is an anoscopy?

An anoscopy is a procedure that uses a small, thin tube called an anoscope to look inside your anus. Anoscopy can help check for conditions, such as anal dysplasia (abnormal growth of cells in the anal canal) and anal cancer. Early detection of these conditions can make them easier to treat.

Why do I need an anoscopy?

Your doctor may recommend an anoscopy if you have:

- Painful bowel movements
- Pain in or near your anus
- Rectal bleeding
- Itching around your anus
- A lump or growth around your anus
- A history of anal cancer or other anal diseases

What happens during an anoscopy?

The procedure is usually done in your doctor's office. You will be asked to lie on your side or stomach, and your doctor will gently insert the anoscope into your anus. The anoscope has a light on the end, so your doctor can see the lining of your anus and rectum. The procedure usually takes only a few minutes and does not need sedation. You may feel some mild discomfort, but it should not be painful.

What should I expect after an anoscopy?

You may have a little bleeding for a few hours after the procedure. You may also feel some mild discomfort, which can be relieved with over-the-counter pain medication.

When should I call my care team?

Call your care team if you have any of the following after an anoscopy:

- Heavy bleeding from your anus
- Severe pain
- Fever
- Pus or discharge from your anus

Reference: medlineplus.gov/lab-tests/anoscopy