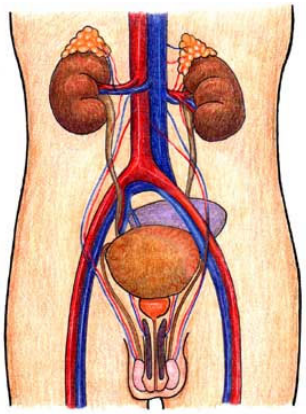
X-Plain™
Cystoscopy - Men
Reference Summary

Cystoscopy is a common urological test that allows the doctor to look inside the bladder.

Your doctor may ask you to have a cystoscopy to diagnose or treat a urological disorder.

This reference summary will help you understand the benefits and risks of cystoscopy.



Anatomy

Kidneys are bean-shaped organs located in the middle to lower back, on both sides of the spine. Their main function is to make urine by filtering harmful chemicals, known as toxins, out of the blood.

The urine formed in the kidneys flows through tubes, called ureters, to be stored in the bladder.

When the bladder is full, people feel the urge to urinate. The urine is emptied through the urethra.

Cystoscopy

Cystoscopy is a procedure that allows the doctor to look inside the bladder.

During a cystoscopy, the doctor can look inside the bladder for tumors. Sometimes, the tumor can be taken out during a cystoscopy.

In men, a cystoscopy can help the urologist determine the size of the prostate and whether or not the prostate is causing urinary problems. The prostate is a gland that forms the fluid that sperm flows in.

Kidney stones can also be pulled out during a cystoscopy. Kidney stones, which develop in the kidney, can go down the ureters into the bladder and get stuck, causing severe pain.

If a stone or a tumor is blocking urine flow from the kidney to the bladder, the doctor can treat this problem during a cystoscopy. A tube called a stent is placed in the ureter, opening it up and allowing the urine to flow. This prevents backpressure against the kidneys.

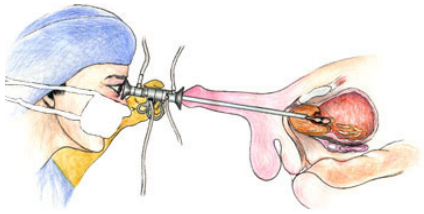
Procedure

Cystoscopy is usually an outpatient procedure, which means the patient goes home the same day.

Cystoscopy is done under local anesthesia. A special gel is used to numb the urethra. General, epidural, or spinal anesthetics are rarely needed.

The patient is asked to undress from the waist down and lie on a table with their legs spread. After applying the local anesthetic, the doctor inserts a scope through the urethra.

As the doctor looks inside the urethra and bladder, he or she might fill the bladder with water. The water stretches the bladder, making it easier for the doctor to see the wall of the bladder.



If the doctor is checking for urinary incontinence, he or she may ask you to cough to see if urine spurts out from the urethra. Urinary incontinence is when you are unable to control urination.

If a tumor is found, the urologist can either take it out or just take a sample of it. It is then sent to the lab for examination. This is called a biopsy.

When the procedure is finished, the scope is taken out.

Risks and Complications

Cystoscopy is a very safe procedure. There are, however, some risks and complications, which are unlikely, but possible.

You need to know about them just in case they happen. By being informed you may be able to help your doctor detect complications early.

Some risks may be associated with the type of anesthetic used. Your doctor will discuss these risks with you in greater detail.

Some risks are seen in any type of surgery, such as infection and bleeding. These are rare in cystoscopy.

Severe and persistent burning during urination may be due to a bladder infection resulting from the cystoscopy. Such symptoms need to be reported to the urologist immediately.

Persistent and continuous blood in the urine is abnormal and needs to be reported to the urologist immediately.

Rarely, blood clots can block the urethra and prevent urination. You should call your doctor in case you are unable to urinate. He or she may need to relieve the obstruction.

Damage to the urethra, bladder, ureters, kidneys, and other abdominal organs is extremely rare, but possible.

After the Procedure

It is normal to have some bladder spasm after a cystoscopy. This may cause a feeling of urgency, or having to go to the bathroom all the time.

Some blood in the urine is normal after a cystoscopy, especially if a tumor was taken out.

Some burning during urination is common for a day or two after a cystoscopy.

These symptoms should, however, improve within a few days. If they do not improve within two or three days, it could mean that there is an infection and the urologist needs to be informed.

Summary

Cystoscopy is a procedure that allows the doctor to diagnose and treat several urological disorders.

Cystoscopy is a very safe procedure. Rarely, however, some risks and complications do happen. Knowing about them will help you to detect them early so they can be treated.