

# HIGH RESOLUTION ANOSCOPY



## WHY DO I NEED THIS PROCEDURE?

Your provider may recommend HRA if:

- You have a history of abnormal anal Pap test results
- You are at increased risk for anal cancer (e.g., HIV-positive, men who have sex with men, history of cervical or vulvar dysplasia)
- You have symptoms such as anal bleeding, pain, or lesions

HRA helps detect pre-cancerous changes early, when they are easiest to treat.

## HOW DO I PREPARE?

1. Purchase a Fleet enema from your local drugstore, and administer about 1-2 hours before your appointment to clear any stool out of your rectum.
2. Avoid anal sex, douching, or using anal creams/suppositories for 24-48 hours before the procedure unless instructed otherwise.
3. Let your provider know if you are on blood thinners or have bleeding disorders.

## WILL IT BE PAINFUL?

During the procedure you will feel a lot of pressure that is often uncomfortable but usually not described as painful, but pain is a risk of the procedure and a rare complication afterwards. The biopsies are usually, but not always, painless. Slight bleeding is expected after the biopsies for a few days, heavy bleeding is not expected but it is a risk. If you experience pain sometimes there are numbing injections that can help. Infection is very rare but is also a risk after the procedure.

## WHAT IS HIGH RESOLUTION ANOSCOPY (HRA)?

High Resolution Anoscopy (HRA) is a procedure used to closely examine the anal canal and surrounding tissue. It uses a special microscope (called a colposcope) and a magnifying lens to help identify abnormal cells or lesions that may be caused by the human papillomavirus (HPV) and could lead to anal cancer if left untreated.

## WHAT HAPPENS DURING THE PROCEDURE?

- Positioning: You will lie on your side or in a position similar to a pelvic exam.
- Exam: A lubricated speculum will be inserted into the anus to gently open the canal.
- Vinegar & Lugol's Iodine Application: These solutions may be applied to highlight abnormal cells.
- Magnification: The provider uses a colposcope (not inserted) to examine the tissue under high magnification.
- Biopsies (if needed): Numbing medicine may be injected into the canal, and small samples may be taken from abnormal areas. You may feel slight pressure or pinch. Sometimes cautery will be used to treat these abnormal areas.

The procedure usually takes 20-25 minutes.



## WHAT TO EXPECT IF I NEED TREATMENT OF ABNORMAL LESIONS

Your biopsy has shown high grade anal dysplasia (HSIL) that, if left untreated, may progress to cancer. Today we will remove this precancer using a technique called electrocautery (EC). A device will be used to make a shallow burn which will destroy the precancer. Normal tissue will then grow back in its place.

Most of this procedure will be very similar to the original biopsy. The anoscope will be used to locate the pre-cancer, then you will be numbed with an injection. After numbing we will apply the EC probe to destroy the pre-cancer. This is not comfortable but should not be painful. If at any time you feel severe pain please let your doctor know immediately.

## WHAT SHOULD I EXPECT AFTER?

- Mild spotting or bleeding is common, especially if biopsies were taken.
- Avoid anal sex, douching, or inserting anything into the rectum for at least 5–7 days if biopsies were done.
- You can return to normal activity right after the procedure.
- If you undergo ablation/treatment of abnormal lesions:
  - You should be able to go about your normal daily activities. You may experience some pain after the numbing wears off, particularly with bowel movements. **CONSTIPATION IS YOUR WORST ENEMY.** You will be given a prescription for stool softeners and a narcotic pain medication. Be sure to use the stool softener to avoid constipation. If you use the narcotic only, then the medicine will cause constipation which will make your pain worse. Use the stool softener every day (or more if needed), and Tylenol as the first step for pain. Only use the narcotic as a last resort. Remember, **constipation is your worst enemy.**
  - You will experience some mild bleeding for up to 2–4 weeks after the procedure during the healing phase. Do not put anything into your anus until after the bleeding stops for good. If you experience severe pain, severe bleeding, or fevers then call the clinic right away. If it is after business hours then please go to the Emergency Room. Generally, we do a follow-up HRA in 2–6 months to make sure that the pre-cancer has not come back.
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## THE SITZ BATH

One of the most effective things that you can do to relieve pain and promote healing is called a “Sitz” (pronounced ‘sits’) Bath. Fill up your bathtub with hot (but not scalding!) water. Sit in it so that the water comes up to your bellybutton. Sit in here for 15–20 minutes, at least once a day. More is better (it is not possible to overdo this) and it will promote bloodflow, relax muscles, help with pain and promote healing. Do this early and often!


## BEST SERVICE


### WHEN WILL I GET RESULTS?

Biopsy results, if taken, are usually ready in 7–14 days. Your provider will contact you to discuss next steps.

### WHEN TO CALL YOUR PROVIDER

- Contact your clinic if you experience:
- Heavy bleeding (more than a pad per hour)
- Fever over 100.4°F
- Severe pain
- Foul-smelling discharge

 (248) 551-0268 option #2

 <https://www.beaumont.org/treatments/colorectal-cancer-multidisciplinary-clinic>



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