Cystoscopy lets your urologist see into your bladder and its opening to examine and treat different problems that affect the urinary tract.

What is cystoscopy?

• If it is necessary to see inside your bladder and urinary tract, your urologist will do an examination called cystoscopy.

• Your urinary tract is the system that removes urine from your body. (See diagram: The male and female urinary tracts)

• A tool like a small camera on a thin tube (called a cystoscope) is used to see inside your bladder and the urinary tract.

• Cystoscopy can be done in your urologist’s office or in hospital

• You will be told where the exam will be done, the date and time.

• You will need to plan for a ride home if you have a general anesthetic. (See section “What happens after cystoscopy?”)

What happens before the cystoscopy?

• On the day of your examination, you may be asked to undress and put on a hospital gown.

• You will be asked a few questions and be told about the examination.

• When all is ready, you will be taken to a room to lie down on a special bed.

• Your legs may be lifted and put into stirrups.

• For the cystoscopy, everything is thoroughly cleaned to stop any bacteria from getting into the bladder and causing infection.

• Before the examination begins, a sterilized mixture is used to clean the genital area, which is then covered with a sterilized sheet.

• During the cystoscopy, although you will be awake and may feel something, any discomfort should be manageable.

• Your anesthesiologist will explain your options:
  – A “local” anesthetic (“freezing jelly”) is put into your urethra to numb its lining – most often used in simple cystoscopies
  – A light sedation (feeling very relaxed but awake)
  – general anesthetic (being “put to sleep”)

• If extra tests are planned for the cystoscopy, your urologist may recommend either light sedation or general anesthetic.

• For a general anesthetic, you will be asked not to eat or drink anything for a few hours before your procedure.
What occurs during the cystoscopy?

• The cystoscope is passed through the urethra into the bladder (See diagram: “The male and female urinary tracts”).
• It is important that you are relaxed during the examination.
• The bladder is filled with sterile water.
• Special lenses on the cystoscope are used to look at every part of the bladder’s lining. The prostate and urethra might be included. (See diagram: The male and female urinary tracts)
• The whole examination usually takes only a few minutes.
• You should be able to get back to your activities right away unless you had a general anesthetic.
• If you had a general anesthetic
  – You will have to wait before going home until the anesthetic has worn off.
  – You will need a ride home.
  – You should be able to get back to your activities by the next day.

What happens after cystoscopy?

• For a few days after cystoscopy, you may:
  – Feel burning when you urinate
  – See blood in the urine
• These symptoms disappear more quickly if you drink plenty of fluids (water as much as you can) and empty your bladder often.
• Your urologist will talk with you immediately after your cystoscopy about what was found.
• If needed, you may be prescribed medication after your cystoscopy.
• Later, you may need to make an appointment to:
  – Review all your results
  – Plan for more tests or treatments if needed

Notes / Diagrams:

Your cystoscopy appointment has been scheduled for:

Day: ________________________________
Date: ______________________________
Time: ______________________________
Location: __________________________

Notes: ______________________________