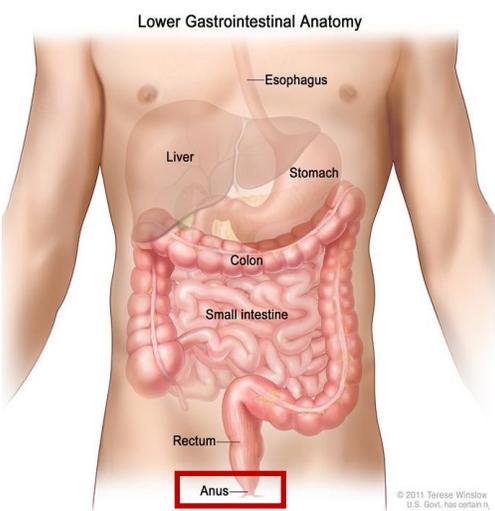


# WHAT TO EXPECT DURING YOUR HRA

## The *What* and *Why* behind your High Resolution Anoscopy

**WHY DO I NEED AN HRA?** Anal dysplasia is the development of abnormal cells (or a lesion) in the lining (skin) of the anal canal. Anal dysplasia can be low-grade (mild) or high-grade (moderate to severe). Some low-grade lesions may get worse and become high-grade lesions. High-grade lesions can progress to cancer. Not all lesions get worse. Some do not change and may even disappear. Anal dysplasia is mainly seen inside the anal canal and in the skin of the perianus.

HPV (a common sexually transmitted disease) can cause anal dysplasia. If your doctor believes that you are at higher risk for developing anal dysplasia, he/she may recommend you receive a HRA.



### WHAT HAPPENS DURING MY HRA APPOINTMENT?

*History:* Your provider will ask you about how you are doing, your health habits, past illnesses, and medica-

tions.

**Digital-Exam:** The provider will do an exam of the anus and rectum by inserting a lubricated, gloved finger into the anus and lower part of the rectum to feel for lumps or anything that seems unusual.

**Anal Pap Test/Anal Cytology:** A moist swab or Q-Tip® will collect cells from the anal canal to be observed under a microscope. This procedure checks for abnormal cells in the anus and should only last about 10 seconds.

**HRA with possible biopsy:** Your provider will use a plastic instrument (*anoscope*) inside the anal canal and will look through it using a special microscope (*colposcope*). If an abnormal area is seen, the provider will give you some numbing medication and remove a small piece of tissue (*biopsy*) to send to a specialist (*pathologist*) to check for signs of *dysplasia* or cancer. Anyone with an abnormal anal Pap test should have an HRA with possible biopsy to examine the anal canal. The exam will normally

### WHAT CAN I EXPECT AFTER MY HRA APPOINTMENT?

If you have a biopsy during your HRA, your anus will need several days to heal. To prevent infection/bleeding, for 1 week after your procedure:

1. Avoid lifting anything more than 20 pounds
2. Avoid inserting **anything** into the anus (no anal sex, fingers, toys, or suppositories) until bleeding stops.

Some more tips:

- To help with mild to moderate pain or discomfort, you can take over-the-counter medicine acetaminophen (Tylenol) or ibuprofen (Advil)
- Soaking the area in hot water can help, especially after bowel movements, to reduce pain
- Drinking more water can help prevent constipation

A small amount of bleeding with bowel movements may happen for a few days, and rarely, infection or severe bleeding may also occur. Please call the office or your local emergency room if you develop severe pain, heavy bleeding, or a fever of more than 101° F.

### HOW CAN I PROTECT AGAINST HPV & ANAL DYSPLASIA?

- 1). Practice safer sex— use condoms **EVERY** time you have sex to reduce your risk of getting HPV.
- 2). Having fewer sexual partners will also decrease your risk of getting HPV.
- 3). Stop cigarette smoking.
- 4). If you are between the ages of 9-26, get the Gardasil®, vaccine to help prevent new infections of HPV types 6, 11, 16, or 18 that cause warts and cancer. The vaccine only protects against HPV types you have not had.

Anal dysplasia can be treated successfully, but people with HIV are at higher risk of seeing it reoccur. HIV therapy does **not** protect against anal dysplasia/cancer. It is important to see your provider for regular check-ups.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, VISIT:

<http://www.cancer.gov>

<http://www.cancer.org>

<http://www.oncolink.org>

FOR INFORMATION ABOUT OPEN CLINICAL TRIALS:

<http://www.aids cancer.org>

<http://www.analcancerinfo.ucsf.edu>

<http://www.analcancerfoundation.org>

