

*Article 1038*

## **Overview**

An anoscopy is a procedure in which a small tube is inserted into the anus. This allows a doctor to see the inside of the anus and anal canal.

## **Who is a candidate for the test?**

An anoscopy may be ordered for persons who have pain in the rectum or anus. It can be ordered if the person's doctor suspects hemorrhoids or other problems in the anus. The test may also be done to check for anal fissures, which are abnormal openings between the anus and the skin.

## **How is the test performed?**

The doctor first does a digital rectal exam. This is done by inserting a lubricated, gloved finger into the rectum. The anoscope is a tube-shaped optical device designed just for this test. It has a light that lets the doctor see inside the anal canal. If an abnormal area is seen, a piece of tissue can be removed for testing in the laboratory. This small sample of tissue is called a biopsy.

## **What is involved in preparation for the test?**

The doctor will provide specific instructions about how to prepare for this test.

## **What do the test results mean?**

An anoscopy can detect any unhealthy features in the shape, color, or size of the anus, such as:

- » anal abscesses, which are pockets of pus around the anus
- » cancer of the anus or end of the rectum
- » colorectal polyps
- » hemorrhoids
- » sources of anal or rectal bleeding