A digital rectal exam also known as DRE is a simple physical examination of the lower rectum. Your doctor will place you in a comfortable position and use a gloved, lubricated finger to do a thorough check for anything out of the ordinary.

**Test Description**
Generally the doctor will begin by first checking the outside of the anus area for fissures or hemorrhoids. Then they will use a gloved finger that has been lubricated to inset into the rectum and feel for any abnormalities.

**Test Preparation**
Getting ready for this test is simple, you will not need to do any pre preparations before the appointment. Your doctor will be asking you to relax and take a deep breath prior to them inserting the finger. Yes relax and take a deep breath. On second thought you may want to practice this before and mentally take yourself to a happy place.

**What To Expect During the Exam**
There is no pain involved in this test; however you may feel a moment of discomfort, go back to the happy place.

**Purpose of Test**
This test is generally one of the first examinations performed. Your doctor may be looking for the source of any bleeding, blockages, or pain. It is also performed as a routine exam during yearly check ups for prostrate cancer, colorectal cancer, or during a women’s gynecological exam.

The doctors will also use a digital rectal exam prior to any anus/rectal type tests to make sure there is nothing that will block the instruments going in.

**Test Results**

**Normal**
Even if your doctor feels nothing abnormal during the exam, this does not necessary rule out everything. As mentioned before, the digital rectal exam it usually done prior to any other types of rectal tests to help rule out any other abnormalities.

**Abnormal**
If there is anything out of the ordinary during the exam your doctor will continue with further testing. If there was blood found there may also be an anemia test performed also. Once your condition is diagnosed your doctor will go over suggested treatment plans.
Risks
This is the simplest of exams and there is usually no risk involved.