



# COLONOSCOPY

## Prep Instructions

Central Scheduling—402-367-1375  
Outpatient Dept.—402-367-1265  
Nurses' Station—402-367-1200

### Colonoscopy

Colonoscopy is the visual examination of the large intestine (colon) using a lighted, flexible fiberoptic or video endoscope. The colon begins in the right-lower abdomen and looks like a big question mark as it moves up and around the abdomen, ending in the rectum. The colon has a number of functions including withdrawing water from the liquid stool that enters it so that a formed stool is produced.

### Benefits

A colonoscopy is performed to identify and/or correct a problem in the colon. The test enables a diagnosis to be made and specific treatment can be given. If a polyp is found during the exam, it can be removed at that time. All polyps are sent to the lab for further testing. If a bleeding site is identified, treatment can be administered to stop the bleeding. Other treatments can be given through the endoscope when necessary.

### Reasons for the Exam

There are many types of problems that can occur in the colon. The medical history, physical exam, laboratory tests, and x-rays can provide useful information. Directly viewing the inside of the colon by colonoscopy is usually the best exam.

Colonoscopy is used for:

- Colon Cancer - a serious, but highly curable malignancy.
- Polyps - fleshy tumors which usually are the forerunners of colon cancer.
- Colitis (Ulcerative or Crohn's) - chronic, recurrent inflammation of the colon.
- Diverticulosis and Diverticulitis - pockets along the intestinal wall that develop over time and can become infected.
- Bleeding Lesions - hidden or massive bleeding that may occur from different points in the colon.
- Abdominal symptoms, such as pain or discomfort.
- Abnormal barium x-ray exam.
- Chronic diarrhea or constipation.
- Positive Cologuard

### Preparation

To obtain the full benefits of the exam, the colon must be clean and free of stool. The patient receives instructions on how to do this. It involves drinking a solution and oral pills which flush the colon clean. The patient drinks only clear liquids and eats no food for the day before the exam. The physician advises the patient regarding the use of regular medications during that time.

## **The Procedure**

Colonoscopy is usually performed on an outpatient basis. The patient is mildly sedated, the colonoscope is inserted through the anus and moved gently around the bends of the colon. If a polyp is encountered, a thin wire snare is used to lasso it. Electrocautery (electrical heat) is applied to painlessly remove it. Other tests can be performed during colonoscopy, including biopsy to obtain a small tissue specimen for microscopic analysis.

The procedure time varies from patient to patient and some patients have partial recall of the procedure. It is normal to experience mild cramping or abdominal pressure. A recovery area is available to monitor the patient for a short time after the procedure, if necessary.

## **Results**

After the exam, the physician explains the findings to the patient and family. If a biopsy has been performed or a polyp removed, the results of these are available in 3 to 7 days. If you have not received results by 2 weeks after your procedure, please call your physician.

**Do not assume “No News is Good News”.**

## **Side Effects and Risks**

Bloating and/or nausea occur rarely. Serious risks with colonoscopy are uncommon. One such risk is excessive bleeding especially with the removal of a polyp. In rare instances, a perforation or tear in the lining of the colon can occur. These complications may require hospitalization and possibly surgery. Quite uncommonly, a diagnostic error or oversight may occur.

Due to the mild sedation, the patient should not drive or operate machinery following the exam. For this reason, a driver must be available to take you home.

## **Alternative Testing**

Alternative tests to colonoscopy include a barium enema or other types of x-ray exams that outline the colon and allow a diagnosis to be made. Cologuard is an at-home Colon Cancer Screening Test to detect blood in the stool. These exams, however, do not allow direct viewing of the colon or removal of polyps or biopsies to be done.

## **An Important Exam Requires Careful Preparation**

Your doctor has decided that a colonoscopy is necessary to better evaluate your colon, or large intestine. An important examination such as this requires careful preparation. The results obtained from this exam are dependent on your lower bowel (colon) being carefully cleansed and empty. An improperly prepared bowel may mean that the exam will have to be repeated at another time. More importantly, fecal matter (stool) left in the intestinal tract can hide important conditions that may be present. Therefore, it is very important that you follow these instructions as carefully as possible.

### **A couple of hints:**

- To fully evacuate the colon, this preparation will cause you to have many liquid bowel movements. Note that individual responses to laxatives vary widely.
- Drink extra fluids the day before you prep.
- Rubbing a small amount of hydrocortisone cream or vaseline around the anal area after each bowel movement can lessen the irritation.
- On the day of your exam, wear comfortable, easily removable clothing, and leave jewelry and other valuables at home.
- If you are having a menstrual period, it is okay to wear a tampon.

## **In Summary**

Colonoscopy is an outpatient exam that is performed with the patient sedated. The procedure provides significant information upon which specific treatment can be given. In certain cases, therapy can be administered directly through the colonoscope. Serious complications rarely occur from colonoscopy. The physician can answer any questions the patient has.

## PREP

**Day Before Exam** Date \_\_\_\_\_

- NO SOLID FOODS!
- Clear liquid diet all day prior to the test.  
Clear liquid diet consists of anything you can see through. This includes bouillon broth, jello (not red), apple juice, cranberry juice, black coffee, tea, pop, gatorade, & lemonade drink.  
(No milk products) (No orange juice),
- **You should drink at least an 8 oz. glass of water, juice, pop, or other clear liquid every hour while awake the day of your prep.**
- Set the alarm on your phone to go off every hour to remind you to drink 8 oz.

**\*\*\* If Diabetic, start pushing juices and other liquids TWO days before your procedure.**

### PREP

- Purchase a **14** dose bottle (238 grams) of Miralax. Generic name is Polyethylene Glycol.
- Purchase 4 Dulcolax Laxative (**Not Dulcolax Stool Softener**) tabs. Generic name is Bisacodyl. These should be orange in color.

At 10:00 am, take 4 Dulcolax laxative tabs with an 8 ounce glass of apple juice.

At 1:00 pm, mix 64 ounces of any clear liquid, or two 32 ounce Gatorade bottles, with the bottle of Miralax (238 grams). **Drink this mixture in 2-3 hours.**

### Special Instructions for Colonoscopy

Date of Test \_\_\_\_\_

Physician for colonoscopy is Dr. \_\_\_\_\_

We will call you the day before with your admit time.

Admit Time \_\_\_\_\_

**Stop drinking liquids 5 hours before admit time.**

- Schedule appointment for a pre-op physical with your primary care provider, if not already completed.
- DO NOT take blood thinners, aspirin, iron, Vitamin E, Fish Oil, or any medication that contains oil 7 days prior to the procedure.
- Hold blood thinner, Coumadin, or \_\_\_\_\_.  
Last Dose \_\_\_\_\_
- Follow prep instructions in this brochure.

- **Morning of Exam—Medications:**  
Take blood pressure and heart meds with a small sip of water, if instructed to do so.

- **Bring your medicines in their original bottles or an accurate medication list with you the day of your procedure.**

- You must have a responsible adult to drive you home.
- DO NOT drive, work with dangerous machinery, make legal decisions, or drink alcohol until the next day.