



Colonoscopy

Important! This exam requires that you have an empty stomach. Stop drinking all fluids (including clear liquids and water) 4 hrs before the exam (minimal sips are allowed only to take your usual medications). Avoid gum and hard candy.

Medications:

- If you take insulin or other diabetic medicines, dosage adjustments will be provided for you. Bring your insulin with you so that you can take it after the procedure if necessary.
- If you are on blood thinners such as Coumadin, Plavix (clopidogrel), Pradaxa, Effient, etc., let us know at the time of scheduling because they may need to be held.
- If you are taking any prescribed or over-the-counter diet pills, you should stop taking them 2 weeks (14 days) before your procedure. Failing to stop these medications 14 days in advance of your procedure may result in anesthesia complications and your procedure will need to be rescheduled.
- All other medications should be taken at their usual time with a few sips of water. Iron supplements are usually held 2 days before the exam.

The preparation

Before your colonoscopy, you must take a colon-cleansing product to clear the stool from your colon. Bowel preparation is no fun, but is very important to ensure that your physician has optimal visualization of your colon during the procedure. Careful attention to detail will help avoid the need to reschedule or repeat your exam. Please click on the prep that was recommended for you for additional instructions (all, but the first require a prescription):

Gatorade / Miralax Prep

Golytely Prep

Two Day Golytely Prep

Two Day Double Dose Golytely Prep

Osmo Prep

Prepopik Prep

Suprep Prep

Please read your prep instructions immediately because the preparation process begins several days before your procedure!

You must have someone (must be at least 18 yrs old) with you during the entire time from check-in through recovery and to drive you home after the exam (a taxi or bus is not an option).

What is it and why do I need it?

Colonoscopy is an endoscopic procedure that uses a tiny camera attached to a long scope to examine the large intestine (the colon). It is most often used to screen for colon cancer with the goal of removing polyps (small growths) that could become cancerous in the future. With no family history of colon cancer, most should begin screening at age 50. Colonoscopy is also frequently used to diagnose problems associated with diarrhea, bleeding, etc.

The risks

You will be asked to sign a consent form at the time of the exam. The risks of colonoscopy are low (under 1%), but do include bleeding (which rarely can occur days later if a large polyp is removed), perforation, infection, tearing of the lining, aspiration, spleen injury, medication reactions and heart/lung problems. If you have any concerns about these risks, please contact your physician before your procedure. You will also be able to discuss this with your physician at the time of the exam.

The procedure

The entire process, from when you arrive to when you leave, may take 2-3 hours. In the preparation area, you will be asked questions about your health history. Your procedure will take about 20 minutes and you will be sedated for it. Once you are asleep, the colonoscope will be inserted through your rectum and around the colon. Your physician will then withdraw it looking for any abnormalities that need to be biopsied, removed or treated. If polyps are found, they will be removed.

After the procedure

Most patients experience little if any discomfort. You may have a full feeling so you will be encouraged to pass gas. In the recovery unit, your physician will discuss the results with you and give you discharge instructions. You and your driver will remain in the recovery unit until your sedation has worn off to a satisfactory level. After discharge, you may resume your usual diet and light activities and return to work the following day. However, **you may not drive, make important decisions or operate machinery the rest of the day. You must have someone who is at least 18 yrs old with you during the entire time from check-in through recovery and to drive you home after the exam (a taxi or bus is not an option).** A report will be sent to your referring physician. If any biopsies are taken, you will be contacted with the results.

Some degree of apprehension is normal, but most of our patients find the procedure to be less unpleasant than they anticipated. We will try to make your examination as comfortable as possible.