



# Patient Information Leaflet

COLONOSCOPY



Harley Street  
Medical Centre



# Colonoscopy

## ***What is a Colonoscopy?***

A colonoscopy is a test where your doctor can examine the lining of the colon (large bowel) by inserting a flexible tube (about the thickness of your finger) into the anus and by advancing it slowly into the rectum and colon. The gastroenterologist can carefully guide the instrument in any direction to look at the inside of the colon. The high quality video and images will be saved and recorded for further evaluation.

Colonoscopy is an important way to check for colon cancer and abnormal growths on the inside lining of the colon or called polyps which sometimes vary in shape and size. Some are not cancerous others could turn into cancer. Colonoscopy may allow the removal of polyps in the same setting with a procedure called Polypectomy. This reduces the risk of developing colorectal cancer by removing the polyps.

Colonoscopy is an effective and safe diagnostic and therapeutic instrument which may help to avoid surgery.

## ***What do I need to do before the Procedure?***

The bowel must be totally clean for the procedure to be accurate and complete. Your doctor will give you clear instructions about what foods you should eat and how you should cleanse and prepare your bowels before the test. Follow your doctor's instructions carefully. If you do not, the procedure may have to be cancelled and repeated later.

Most medication may be continued as usual, but some medications can interfere with the preparation or the test. Tell your doctor about all medications you are currently taking, as well as

any allergies to medications you have, several days prior to the test.

Aspirin products, arthritis medications, anticoagulants (blood thinners), insulin and iron products are examples of medications whose use should be discussed with your doctor prior to the test. It is necessary to discuss other important issues such as medical conditions (such as heart, or lung conditions, diabetes, diabetic medications, or bleeding problems).

You will be given written instructions about the preparation for your colonoscopy and you will be given a consent form to read and sign. You will also have an opportunity to ask questions and receive detailed explanations.

### ***What happens during the Colonoscopy?***

Colonoscopy is usually well tolerated and rarely causes much discomfort.

Your vital signs will be monitored and the anesthesiologist will give you a medication that will make you sleep during the procedure. You will be lying on your side while the doctor advances the colonoscope slowly through your bowel. Your Gastroenterologist will use the scope to look closely for any problems that may require further evaluation or treatment.

As the colonoscope is slowly withdrawn, the lining of your bowel is again carefully examined. The procedure usually takes 15 to 30 minutes. Generally, however, there is little or no discomfort.

### ***What if the Colonoscopy shows something abnormal?***

If the doctor thinks that an area of the bowel needs to be evaluated in greater detail, he will take a biopsy (a sample of the colon lining). This sample is sent to the lab to be checked. If the

colonoscopy is being performed to identify areas of bleeding, it may be sealed off during the test using special devices such as clips.

### ***What happens after the Colonoscopy?***

After the colonoscopy, you will be cared for in the room to recover until most of the effects of the medication have worn off. Your doctor will explain the results to you.

You will be given instructions about how soon you can eat and drink, and other information for continuing your normal activity. You are not allowed to drive for 24 hours and someone must take you home when you leave the hospital.

In a few days, you will hear from our endoscopy team with additional information such as biopsy results and your follow up check-up timings.

### ***What are the risks of Colonoscopy?***

Colonoscopies are generally safe when performed by doctors who are specially trained and are experienced in these endoscopic procedures. Although complications after a colonoscopy are uncommon, it is important for you to recognize early signs of any possible problem.

### ***Things to report to your Doctor after Colonoscopy***

- Severe abdominal pain
- Rectal bleeding or passage of clots of blood
- Fever and chills
- A temperature greater than 38 degrees celsius
- Redness, tenderness and swelling at the site of the intravenous injection that lasts for more than 48 hours.





*Reference:*

*American Gastroenterological Association (AGA), Patient Center; Preparing for a Lower GI Endoscopy*



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