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## **Understanding a Colonoscopy Examination**

A colonoscopy is an examination of the large intestine. The procedure is performed with a narrow flexible instrument called a colonoscope that will be placed into your rectum in order to visualize the lining of your colon. Tissue may be sampled (biopsy), polyps may be removed, and bleeding sites may be treated to stop bleeding. You will not feel any sensation or discomfort when the biopsy is performed, the polyp is removed, or if bleeding is treated. Photographs may also be taken.

### **On the day of your exam:**

Check in at the location indicated on the top of your "Colonoscopy Preparation Instructions" form. When you arrive check in with the receptionist. You must have someone to drive you home the day of your procedure, (you will be asked about your transportation home).

An RN will escort you to the admit area, where you will then be asked to sign a consent form authorizing the physician to perform the procedure. You will be asked to undress completely and put on a gown. The nurse will place an IV in your arm for you to receive sedative medications. You may leave your dentures in place. Your eyeglasses will be removed. If you are receiving anesthesia, the anesthetist will administer medications through your IV. The exam will take about 30 minutes.

### **Risks:**

A colonoscopy is a low risk procedure when performed by a competent specialist. However, all of the following complications are possible:

- Perforation (tearing) or bleeding of the gastrointestinal wall
- Bleeding after biopsy
- Phlebitis of the vein due to irritation from the sedative medication at the injection site
- Other risks include drug reactions or complications from other medical problems that you may already have
- Instrument failure or death are extremely unlikely but remain remote possibilities
- Trauma to internal organs

### **Results:**

Preliminary findings will be discussed with you after you are awake. You will receive a copy of printed discharge instructions. A full report will be sent to your primary care physician. Biopsy and polyp results are usually available in 10-14 days. You will receive results by patient portal, phone or mail.



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## Colonoscopy Preparation FAQ

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❖ **Why do I have to drink so much clear liquid in addition to the prep?**

All colon preps may cause you to become somewhat dehydrated. The large volume of liquid will help prevent dehydration and provide lubricant to aid in emptying your colon.

❖ **How do I take my daily medications?**

See ANESTHESIA PREPARATION form in your procedure packet.

❖ **Do I have to wait until 6 pm to start the prep?**

No, you may start as early as 4 pm.

❖ **What if the prep hasn't started working?**

It is normal to have somewhat of a delay between drinking the prep and having bowel movements. You may try walking around and drinking more liquid or wait, it will work.

❖ **What if I feel nauseated while taking the prep?**

The first thing to do is stop drinking the prep and take a break. After nausea has decreased or stopped, you can restart the colon prep but drink it at a slower rate. It may help to refrigerate the prep or drink it through a straw. If nausea and vomiting persist, please call the office to discuss.

❖ **I'm already clear, do I need to take the second dose of the prep?**

Yes, take the second dose as directed. Although you may think you are "clear", there may be more stool present which needs to be removed. If unable to tolerate, refer to the previous question and take a break.

❖ **What if I am still not "clear"?**

Ideally, we would like you to be having clear watery liquid excretions. Yellow liquid is ok. If your stool is brown or solid the day of your procedure, please call the office.

❖ **What if I accidentally ate something the day before my procedure?**

Please call the office and ask to speak with the triage nurse.

❖ **What if I have been eating seeds and nuts?**

If up to 3 days prior to procedure and was not a large quantity, it is ok to continue. If within the last 3 days prior to the procedure, please call the office.

❖ **Can I have my colonoscopy if I am on my menstrual cycle?**

Yes, the procedure can still be performed.

❖ **Can I go back to work after my procedure?**

No, you may not drive or work the day of your procedure.

❖ **What if I have a cold, cough, rash or fever?**

Please contact our office and ask to speak with the triage nurse.