

Medical Information about COLONOSCOPY

After careful medical evaluation, your doctor has recommended that you have a colonoscopy. During a colonoscopy, a flexible instrument (colonoscope) is passed through the rectum into the large bowel or colon. This procedure allows the doctor to examine the lining of the rectum and colon to identify any abnormalities.

Before having a colonoscopy, you should have completed your bowel preparation. It is important that you follow the preparation instructions carefully.

A catheter for intravenous (IV) medications will be placed in the vein in your arm before the procedure. Medication will be injected through the IV to make you sleepy and relaxed.

As you lie on your left side, the doctor will examine your rectum with a gloved, lubricated finger. Then the lubricated colonoscope will be inserted. As the colonoscope is advanced through the colon, the doctor will examine the bowel. The procedure will take 20 to 45 minutes to complete.

A biopsy may be taken for microscopic examination. Most polyps can be removed during the colonoscopy. You should not feel discomfort when a biopsy is performed, or a polyp is removed. Large polyps or tumors that cannot be safely removed by colonoscopy will be biopsied for diagnosis. These lesions usually require surgery or advanced endoscopic techniques for removal.

Many people do not recall the procedure due to the sedation. After the procedure you may feel drowsy and sleep for a short time. It is not unusual to feel bloated or have mild cramps after the procedure due to the air injected during the procedure. You should not feel embarrassed to pass this air as it will improve your comfort.

Colonoscopy is widely used and well tolerated by patients. It is safe, though complications such as bleeding, bowel puncture or medication reactions may occur. Any of these complications could result in hospitalization or require an operation.

Before you leave, the doctor will discuss the findings with you; you may not recall this conversation. Instructions for follow-up will be given after the procedure. A responsible adult should be available to drive/accompany you home.

Please do not hesitate to ask the provider if you have any questions. Biopsy results should be available in one to two weeks.

Call (518) 271-9155 if you have any questions.