

## Questions?

Your physician will speak to you before your procedure and may ask to speak with you after your procedure to explain any findings or to arrange a follow-up appointment to discuss your results.

If you wish to call your Endoscopist's office for results, please allow up to 2 weeks for results.

# Colonoscopy or Flexible Sigmoidoscopy

*Information for patients and  
families*



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# What is a Colonoscopy?

A colonoscopy is a test that looks at the inner lining of a person's large intestine. The large intestine is called the colon.

# What is a Flexible Sigmoidoscopy?

A flexible sigmoidoscopy is an examination of the lower part of the gastrointestinal tract called the colon or large intestine.

## PREPARING FOR A COLONOSCOPY OR FLEXIBLE SIGMOIDOSCOPY

- Drink only clear fluids (water, juice, coffee or tea – no milk or cream) the day prior to your procedure.
- Stop drinking fluids 2 hours before your procedure.
- Take your prescribed medications, as outlined by your family physician, with a small sip of water.
- Follow the split dose bowel preparation sheet outlining how to prepare for your procedure. It is important to follow the instructions so your medical team has the best view of your colon.
- Please leave your valuables at home.
- Arrange to have a friend or family member take you home after the procedure.
- You may be asked to adjust the dose of your medications (like insulin and other diabetic medications).
- If you are taking blood thinning medications, check with your prescribing physician whether these medications need to be stopped or continued for the procedure.

## WHAT HAPPENS DURING A COLONOSCOPY OR FLEXIBLE SIGMOIDOSCOPY?

- The procedure typically takes between 15 and 30 minutes to complete.
- An intravenous (IV ) needle will be put in your arm or hand.
- You will be given medication through the IV to make you feel relaxed.
- The Endoscopist will put a tube with a camera into your anus and up into the rectum and colon.
- Your doctor will look at the inside lining of the colon.

## YOUR DOCTOR MIGHT ALSO:

- Perform a biopsy – taking a small piece of tissue from the colon. (You will not feel this).
- Polyps may be removed during the procedure if seen.



## WHAT HAPPENS AFTER A COLONOSCOPY OR FLEXIBLE SIGMOIDOSCOPY?

- After the procedure, you will be observed in a recovery area until the effects of the sedative medication wears off.
- Once you have met the discharge criteria, you will be able to go home.
- You may feel bloated after the procedure. This is common and the feeling goes away quickly.
- A nurse will review your discharge instructions with you.
- Your physician may ask to see you before you leave.
- You may eat normally after the procedure.
- Do not return to work on the day of procedure.
- Do not drive a car or operate machinery until the next day.

## FOLLOWING YOUR COLONOSCOPY OR FLEXIBLE SIGMOIDOSCOPY, YOU MAY EXPERIENCE SOME OF THE FOLLOWING SYMPTOMS

- Abdominal pain or bloating which persists
- Vomiting
- Fever
- Bleeding from your anus.
- Any passage of blood clots or amount of blood more than a ½ a cup is a cause for concern and you should be in touch with your doctor

**If any of these symptoms persist, please go to the nearest Emergency Department.**