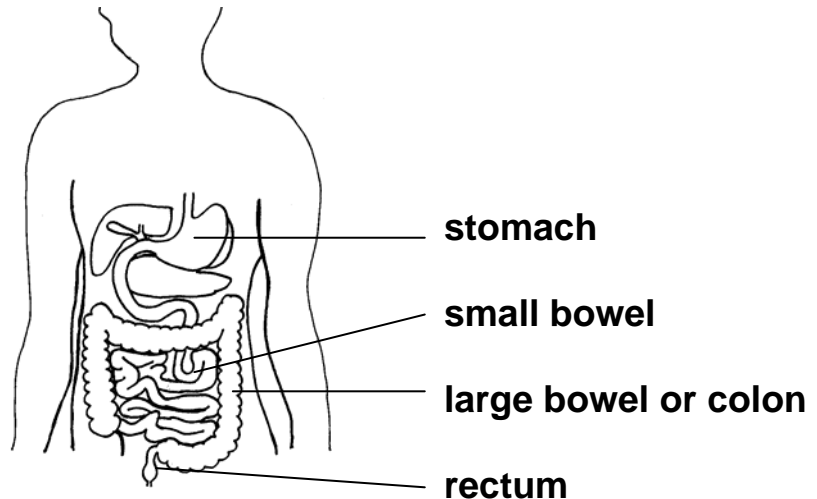


What is colonoscopy?

Colonoscopy is a procedure that looks at the lining of the lower digestive tract. This includes the rectum and large bowel or colon. The doctor looks inside using a thin video camera and tube called a scope. Pictures are sent to a television monitor as the scope goes in and moves along the bowel.



- A colonoscopy is done for many reasons. Your doctor will tell you why you are having this procedure. You will have medication to make you sleep during this procedure. The medication is put into a thin tube in a vein in your arm called an IV.
- This procedure takes 20 to 60 minutes to do but plan to be at the hospital about 1 to 2 hours for preparation and recovery.

What are the risks of this procedure?

While colonoscopy will not detect all polyps or cancer in the colon, studies have shown that it is a very good test. You can also talk to your doctor about more options.

The risks for having a colonoscopy are:

- **Bleeding** may occur from a biopsy site. This happens less than 1 time in 1,000 procedures. Bleeding may occur when a polyp is removed about 2% of the time. Most of the time bleeding stops on its own.
- **Perforation** or injury to the lining of the bowel by an instrument could result in leaking of digestive products into body cavities. If this occurs, surgery to repair the injury may be needed. This happens less than 1 time in 1,000 procedures.

- **Other risks** include, but are not limited, to local irritation of the vein where the medication was injected, an allergic reaction to the medications used, aspiration of saliva or stomach contents, infection or fever that requires antibiotics, or a complication from a pre-existing medical condition such as heart or lung disease or diabetes.
- **Major complications** are rare, but may require hospitalization, and include injury, heart attack or death.

Getting Ready at Home

Medications, allergies and supplies:

Your doctor may want you to stop taking certain medications 4 to 5 days before the test. Contact the doctor doing the procedure at least 1 week before to ask about your medications.

Prepare a list of the current medications you take and any allergies you have. You can ask your pharmacist to print a copy of your record for you. Bring this list or your medications to your procedure.

If you have an ostomy, bring a spare pouch and any supplies you use to change the pouch to your procedure.

Bring all health insurance information to the hospital such as:

- your Ontario Health Insurance card and**
- any other insurance papers such as Blue Cross, Metropolitan etc.**

Make plans for someone to take you home:

Since you are having sedation for the procedure you must arrange for someone to take you home after the procedure. You cannot leave the hospital alone or drive for 24 hours. If you plan to take a taxi home, you still need to have someone with you. Make your plans ahead of time.

Before Coming to the Hospital

Eating and drinking:

- For the best results, your bowel must be clean and empty of waste materials. If your bowel is not cleaned out, the procedure may be cancelled.

Follow these instructions:

- On the day before the test you may eat a normal breakfast and lunch.
- ✘ Do not have any solid food after 1:00 pm.

Follow these instructions (continued):

- Have clear fluids for supper. This includes black coffee and tea, clear soup, jello, apple juice, water and soft drinks. ✘ Do not have any milk or milk products, ice cream, yogurt, creamed soup or milkshakes.
- ✘ Do not have red or orange coloured Jello® or drinks.
- **It is important to follow your doctor's instructions on how to get ready for the colonoscopy. You will be given an instruction sheet to follow.**

Getting to the hospital:

Your driver can drop you off at the front of the hospital off Charlton Avenue East. You can park in the Visitors Parking off James Street South and walk to the unit.

If English is not your first language, please bring someone to interpret.

At the Hospital

Registration:

When you arrive at the Endoscopy Unit on Level 3 of the Sister Mary Grace Wing, register at the desk. You will be asked to wait and a nurse will call you into a room.

◆ Plan to be at the hospital about 1 to 2 hours. There are many doctors and patients in this unit so you may see people go in “out of order”.

In the endoscopy room:

The nurse will ask you some questions and do a nursing history. The nurse will review your allergies and medications with you and help you get ready. You will put a hospital gown on.

The doctor will ask you to sign a consent form if you have not already signed one.

In the procedure room:

A nurse is always with you. You will take off your glasses and remove any dentures. You will then lie on your left side.

The doctor will start your sedation by putting a medication into your IV. It begins to work right away.

The doctor will begin by doing a finger procedure with a glove. The scope will then be put into your rectum. If you have a stoma, the scope will be put into the stoma. You may feel pressure as the scope goes in. You may feel as if you have to have a bowel movement, but do not worry.

The doctor will put some air into the bowel to see clearly. You may feel pressure, bloating or cramping. Feel free to pass gas anytime. If you feel you need more sedation, tell the nurse. Some people sleep through the procedure and do not remember anything after.

As the scope goes in and is moved around, you may be moved onto your back or right side for the doctor to see easier.

The doctor can also take a sample of tissue for testing through the tube. This is called a biopsy. You cannot feel this being done.

During the procedure, the doctor may remove polyps which are abnormal growths of tissue. You cannot feel this being done. If you have polyps removed you may have some bleeding after the procedure. The tissue is sent to the lab for testing and you will get the results of the tests at your follow-up appointment.

The scope is taken out when the doctor is done.

After the Procedure

- You will go to the recovery area until you are fully awake. This takes about ½ hour to 45 minutes. The nurses will check your blood pressure, heart rate, oxygen and breathing to make sure you are alright.
- You may feel full or have cramps from the gas. You should pass this gas and not try to hold it in.
- In the recovery area, you will be given a drink. When you can drink and have no problems, the IV tube will be taken out.
- Your nurse will tell you when you can go home. You will be given an instruction sheet to follow at home after the procedure.
- You must have someone take you home. Rest for the day.

If you have any questions, contact the health care provider's office that ordered this test.