

Colonoscopy Procedure Information/Questions

What is a Colonoscopy?

A colonoscopy is a diagnostic and potentially therapeutic procedure that enables your doctor to examine the lining of the colon for abnormalities. There are many reasons for undergoing a colonoscopy. It is most commonly done for colon cancer screening and prevention. It may also be done for evaluation of changes in bowel habits, blood in stool, rectal bleeding, and abdominal pain.

What happens during the procedure?

After checking in at the front desk, you will be escorted by our medical assistant to a changing room. You will leave your belongings in a locked cabinet and then be brought into the examining room. You will meet the Gastroenterologist and Anesthesiologist who will discuss the test, answer any questions about the procedure you might have, and obtain your signature on a consent form. An intravenous and monitors will be placed and you will be asked to turn onto your left side at which point a sedative will be administered. From that point on you will be comfortable and unaware of the colonoscopy that is being performed. The colonoscope is inserted into the rectum and then advanced to the upper end of the colon. The instrument is then slowly withdrawn and the doctor carefully examines the colon for pathology. If pathology is identified, it may be biopsied or possibly removed at that time. Soon after the exam is completed, you will be awake and transferred into your recovery area where you will stay until you are ready to be discharged from the office. At that time the doctor will meet with you and discuss the results.

Where is the procedure done?

Procedures are conducted in our state of the art Gastroenterology Suite located at our offices.

How long is the procedure?

The procedure typically lasts 20 – 30 minutes. Please also allow an additional 30 minutes for recovery.

Will the procedure hurt?

Some patients note minor discomfort during the procedure. For this reason we can offer anti-anxiety and pain medication. We also offer the option of a Board Certified Anesthesiologist to assure your comfort and safety during the procedure and prompt recovery after the colonoscopy. There may be an extra charge if you choose the anesthesia option.

Are there any risks?

You should be aware that there is an approximately a 0.1% - 1.0% risk for complications associated with colonoscopy. These risks include, but are not limited to:

- A reaction to medications used
- Minor bleeding, rarely enough to need a transfusion
- A risk of colonic perforation which may require surgical repair

Please also note that a colonoscopy is not 100% sensitive and specific and there is a small possibility of a missed diagnosis of polyps or cancer despite having a competently performed colonoscopy.

Insurance Issues

Please note that some insurance companies do not pay for preventative services such as a screening colonoscopy. If your colonoscopy is being done as a preventative exam and the insurance company considers it “non-covered”, you will be responsible for the fee. Please check with your insurance company for clarification.

If you are covered under a managed care plan, you may need a referral or authorization from your primary care physician. If required, please make sure this is obtained prior to your procedure and furnished to our office. Failure to do so will result in the cancellation of the procedure.

For more information on Colonoscopies from the AGA, please go to:

<http://www.gastro.org/wmspage.cfm?parm1=858>

For information on Colorectal Cancer Screening, please go to:

<http://www.gastro.org/wmspage.cfm?parm1=861>