



**WAITEMATA
ENDOSCOPY**

A partnership with Southern Cross Hospitals

COLONOSCOPY

You have been advised by your doctor to have this test.

This information pamphlet will help you understand this procedure and the preparation required.

Colonoscopy is a visual examination of the lining of the large bowel (colon) with intravenous sedation. The endoscope (a thin flexible tube) is passed through the rectum and advanced slowly around the large bowel. Images are viewed on a video screen. The doctor can look for any abnormalities and if necessary biopsies (small tissue samples) can be painlessly taken through the colonoscope using tiny forceps.



If seen, polyps (small growths), can be painlessly removed with diathermy forceps or a wire loop snare which lassos the polyps and cuts it through with an electrical current. All specimens are sent to the laboratory for analysis.

Please inform us of any of the following;

If you have had an allergy or previous bad reaction to medicines or anaesthetics.

If you are taking medications to thin your blood, including **Warfarin, Clopidogrel (Plavix), Dabigatran (Pradaxa), Apixaban, Brilinta** or arthritis medication. You may need to stop these medications or be given an alternative dose.

If you suffer from prolonged bleeding/clotting disorders.

If you have **diabetes** – You must discuss this with your doctor or nurse before undertaking any period of fasting.

If you have heart & lung problems, including **artificial heart valves and pacemakers**.

If you have artificial hip or knee joints.

If you have **sleep apnoea** / or are using a CPAP machine.

If you are **pregnant or breast feeding**.

1 PREPARATION

In order to get a clear unobstructed view and to maximise safety, your bowel must be completely empty of faecal matter. If it is not entirely clear then certain areas of the bowel may be obscured.

You will be given specific instructions about changing your diet for two to three days before the procedure. The day before, you will need to start taking bowel preparation (laxative) to cleanse the bowel.

You will need to be at home once you start taking the bowel preparation. You will not be able to work on the day of the test due to the preparation and sedation. You will also need someone to drive you home.

It is important for Waitemata Endoscopy to know your medical history and in particular any previous endoscopies. Please bring a list of your current medication with you, together with any relevant x-rays, barium studies and CT scans. Also please advise us of any health problems you may have as these may interfere with your colonoscopy, sedation or recovery.

2 THE PROCEDURE

You will be given an appointment time which is when your initial assessment will be done with one of the nursing staff. After your medical history has been taken you will be given the opportunity to view an information DVD before changing into a hospital gown. You will be requested to sign a consent form indicating that you understand the risks involved with the procedure.

Occasionally there is a delay between procedures on the list which is why we ask you to please allow 2-3 hours for your total appointment time.

During the procedure you will be given sedation to make you sleepy and relaxed so that you may have little or no memory of the examination.

The endoscope is gently inserted in to the bowel. Sometimes air in the bowel may cause a feeling of pressure, pain, bloating or cramping, but you can pass this air at any time to make you more comfortable.

During the procedure your position may be changed and the nurse may press on your abdomen to facilitate the passage of the colonoscope. Your heart rate, blood pressure and oxygen levels will be monitored throughout. The examination can take between 10 to 60 minutes.

3 AFTER THE TEST

You will be kept under observation for 30 to 60 minutes until the initial effects of the medications have worn off and you are comfortable. Light refreshments are offered. The doctor or nurse will discuss the procedure with you and will give you written discharge information. The report and any biopsy results will be sent to your specialist and/or family doctor who referred you for the test.

You must arrange for a friend or relative to take you home – even if you feel wide awake. You cannot drive a car, drink alcoholic beverages, travel on public transport alone, operate machinery, sign any legal documents or make any important decisions for 12 hours; as you will still be under the influence of the sedation.





RISKS

Complications following a simple endoscopic examination are very rare but can occur after therapeutic intervention i.e. removal of polyps. A tear or perforation may require hospitalisation, antibiotics and sometimes surgery (risk factor 1 in 1000 normal procedures).

Internal bleeding may come from the biopsy site or where the polyp was removed; this is usually minor and stops naturally.

Reaction to the sedation is rare.

A polyp or lesion may be missed. The risks are higher if your bowel is not clear. If symptoms persist other investigations may be indicated and you are advised to revisit your doctor.

If you would like further information of these rare complications or any other questions or concerns please discuss them with your doctor or nurse before the procedure.

The Waitemata Endoscopy Suite is based at Southern Cross Hospital, North Harbour.

The team welcomes referrals to the group or to an individual specialist, and can also offer:

- // early appointments for urgent cases
- // inpatient endoscopy
- // anaesthetic assistance if required



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