

## The Digestive Health Center

### General Information

### Colonoscopy

**Welcome to the Endoscopy Suite of the Digestive Health Center.** Your doctor has recommended that you have a procedure called a colonoscopy to screen for colon polyps, cancer or further evaluate your condition. The information below is designed to give you an overview of what a colonoscopy is, as well as what you may experience before, during, and after the procedure.

It will also cover essential preparation topics to ensure that your procedure goes as smoothly as possible.

Please read this information carefully and **do not hesitate** to contact us at the phone numbers listed on the last page if you have any questions.

**What is Colonoscopy?** Colonoscopy is a procedure that uses a long lighted flexible tube with a small video camera on the end of it to examine the inside lining of your colon. It is used to detect polyps, cancers, or other colonic diseases such as an inflamed colon. An advantage of this procedure is that it not only allows the doctor to directly see the lining of your colon, but also to remove polyps or growths if seen, and takes a tissue sample if needed to help diagnosis your condition.

**WHAT TO EXPECT PRIOR TO THE PROCEDURE.....GETTING READY...**This is very important and consists of three parts: **First**, the medical team that will be doing your procedure needs to make sure that any health conditions that you have which can affect the procedure are addressed prior to the exam.

**Second**, thorough cleansing of the colon is key and essential for the doctor to adequately see your colon during colonoscopy. Therefore, although the bowel preparation can be the most trying part of the procedure, carefully following the bowel preparation instructions is critical.

**Third**, items and person you will need to bring with you on the day of the procedure.

Important medical history to consider:

1. If you are taking Plavix (Clopidogrel) or Coumadin (Warfarin), you should discuss with your doctor whether or not you should stop these medications prior to your colonoscopy, and how many days prior, the medication should be stopped. If your specific medical condition allows, colonoscopy is safest if performed off these medications.
2. Do not stop aspirin which is taken as a preventative measure for heart disease or a stroke. Current guidelines **do not recommend** that aspirin be stopped.
3. Because the preparation for this exam will require a change in diet and fasting, if you are taking medication for diabetes, you should discuss this with your doctor.
4. If you are taking medications for high blood pressure, continue to take them as normally prescribed. You are allowed to take your medications for high blood pressure on the morning of your procedure with minimal amounts of water.
5. Stop all iron supplementation and vitamins that contain iron for 7 days prior to your colonoscopy. Iron can make the colon appear very dark and decrease the ability of the doctor doing your procedure to adequately examine your colon.
6. If you are a female and there is any question or chance of pregnancy, notify your doctor immediately.
7. If you have had stomach bypass surgery, have problems with nausea, vomiting, or your stomach not emptying properly; contact us immediately at the numbers on the last page so that we may modify your bowel preparation if required.

## **BOWEL PREPARATION**

1. You should have liquid and watery bowel movements during the colon cleansing preparation. There should be no solid matter (large stool particles) in your bowel movement at the completion of the cleansing. If you are having irritation such as sore rectum due to the colon cleansing preparation, you may use over the counter products such as Tucks, etc.
2. If your colonoscopy is scheduled between **7:30 AM and Noon**, you should have nothing to eat or drink after midnight the night before, except your blood pressure medications as described above. You may brush your teeth in the morning. If your colonoscopy is scheduled between **Noon and 4:00 PM**, you may have a clear liquid breakfast in the morning **before 9:00 AM**. Clear liquid diet includes any liquids such as water, coffee, tea, sodas, Gatorade, broths, Jell-O, and popsicles. Do not drink liquids that are red or purple in color.

## **ITEMS/PERSONS TO BRING**

1. Please bring your insurance information with you to your colonoscopy procedure .
2. **Please bring a list of your medications when you come for your colonoscopy procedure.**
3. You will need a driver for the procedure because you will be given medication to make you sleepy during your procedure. The driver needs to stay at the hospital during your procedure time. **We will not be able to do your procedure unless you have someone with you to drive you home. You will not be able to work or drive the day of your procedure.**
4. The Digestive Health Center is located on the Ground floor (**G**), South Building. (See the map which is enclosed.) When you come from the visitor parking lot (orange) level, please walk through the glass breezeway. At the end of the hallway you need to turn right and walk about 150 feet into the hallway. You will see the Digestive Health Center signs. Turn left into the hallway and walk about 50 feet and enter the lobby of the Digestive Health Center. (You may also use the Patient Drop-off area on the Main level as shown on the map. Ask the attendant at the Drop-off area to direct you to the Ground Floor and the Digestive Health Center.)
5. If you need to cancel or reschedule your procedure, please call us **7 DAYS BEFORE YOUR PROCEDURE** at (336) 716-3636; so that others who are waiting may have the opportunity to use the time set aside for you.

## **IN THE ENDOSCOPY SUITE...**

1. In a private preparation and recovery room, an IV will be started in a vein in your arm.
2. You will sign a consent form for colonoscopy which will detail the risks, benefits, and alternatives for the procedure. During this time, you should be sure to discuss any concerns or questions that you might have about the procedure. Although colonoscopy is a safe procedure, complications can occur, including causing a hole or puncture of the colon walls, which could require a surgeon to repair. When a polyp is removed or biopsy is performed, heavy bleeding may also occur and could require reinsertion of the colonoscope to control the bleeding, transfusion or hospitalization. Additionally, colonoscopy is not perfect and even with the most skilled doctor, some colon lesions or abnormalities might be missed.
3. You will receive medicine in the IV to help you relax during your procedure. Some patients will be drowsy or sleepy. Some patients do not remember the procedure.
4. You will lie on your left side with your knees gently flexed during the colonoscopy.
5. The procedure time for colonoscopy ranges from 30-60 minutes.
6. After the colonoscopy is completed, you will be monitored in the preparation-recovery room. When you are alert and awake and all of your vital signs are normal, you will be able to leave with your driver.
7. Your doctor may talk with you and a family member after your procedure or at a later visit in the clinic. Because of the medication, you may not remember everything that is said. Feel free to call your doctor to discuss the results again.

**AFTER YOUR COLONOSCOPY...**

1. Plan to rest for the remainder of the day after your colonoscopy.
2. Sensations of stomach bloating, fullness or discomfort are common. This happens because of the air that was used during your test. You will feel better after you pass gas or burp.
3. If a biopsy was done or a polyp was removed, you may see small streaks or smears of bright red blood in the stool. Call your doctor if you are concerned or the amount increases.
4. Resume your normal diet and medicines as directed by your doctor.

Resume your normal routines the day after your colonoscopy unless you receive other instructions from your doctor

**Signs and Symptoms to Report**

CALL YOUR DOCTOR IF YOU HAVE:

- \*Fever of 101 degrees F. or greater
- \*Severe stomach pain
- \*Rectal bleeding
- \*Any concerns about how you feel

**PHONE NUMBERS**

For any questions, call the Endoscopy Nurse at (336) 716-8204 from, 8:00am to 5:00 pm  
Monday-Friday.

For emergencies after 5:00 PM or on weekends, please call (336) 716-2011 and ask for the doctor on call for  
Gastroenterology.

**Now, please review your enclosed specific "INSTRUCTIONS FOR COLONOSCOPY PREPARATION." If you have any questions about your prep instructions, please call the Digestive Health Center Endoscopy Nurse at (336) 716-8204 to answer those questions.**

If there is anything we can do to make your visit more pleasant, please let us know! WE ARE HERE TO HELP. Thank you for choosing the Digestive Health Center for your care.

The Digestive Health Center  
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