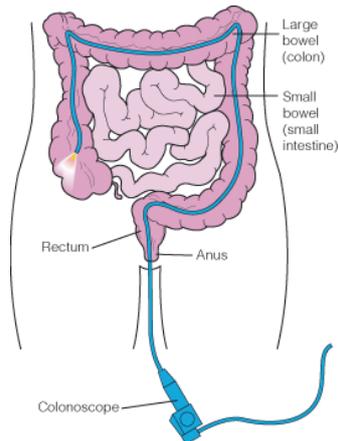


## Patient Information

### Having a Colonoscopy

#### What is a colonoscopy?

A colonoscopy is an examination of the whole of the large bowel (colon) using a flexible tube with a camera at its tip (endoscope). By examining the bowel, the cause of your symptoms may be found and polyps may be found and removed. The test usually takes between 15 and 45 minutes.



#### What are the alternatives?

CT colonography can be used instead of a colonoscopy. Although it is less invasive and does not require sedation, it does not provide such detailed pictures of the lining of the bowel and biopsies and removal of polyps cannot be performed at the same time. This test will usually also require a limited camera test (flexible sigmoidoscopy) of the rectum. You may still need a colonoscopy.

#### What are the risks?

The major risks and complications include damage to the lining of the bowel, a tear in the bowel (perforation), which may require an operation and bleeding, which may require blood transfusion. It is also important to know that there is a small chance despite having a colonoscopy that serious problems, including cancer, may not be picked up. Incomplete colonoscopy occurs if the test is abandoned due to poor bowel preparation, a technical difficulty or because it was causing you too much distress. You may then require an alternative procedure to examine your bowel.

#### How do I prepare for the procedure?

You will have received some bowel preparation (laxatives) to take. Please follow **Eastwood Community Endoscopy Centre's** detailed written instructions for taking the laxatives. Please remember to drink plenty of fluids throughout to prevent dehydration.

If you are on **blood thinning medication eg Apixaban or Clopidogrel, please inform the Endoscopy Centre for instructions.**

**If you have diabetes please contact your Diabetic Nurse or Doctor for instructions regarding diabetic medication.**

#### What should I expect?

Prior to your test you will be seen by a qualified nurse who will go through the pre-assessment or admission process with you. A doctor will also speak to you before your procedure. This will give you the opportunity to ask any questions.

Before the test, you will be asked to change into a hospital gown and a cannula (needle) will be put into your arm or hand, if required.

## **Consent**

Your written consent will be needed prior to the test, and it is important that you read the information about the procedure **BEFORE** coming on the day of the test. This will ensure that you have had time to understand the test. A nurse and the endoscopist will go through the procedure with you again.

**Even if you have provided written consent, you are able to change your mind at any time, even during the procedure.**

## **What happens in the procedure room?**

You will be asked to confirm your name, date of birth and any allergies. Once in the procedure room the nurses will do all they can to make you feel comfortable. You will lie on a trolley and a monitor will be attached to your finger to record your heart rate, oxygen levels and blood pressure will be checked. If you are having sedation, a pair of small prongs will be inserted into your nostrils to supply oxygen throughout the procedure. You will then lie on your left-hand side and will be given an intravenous injection of sedation and painkiller to make you relaxed. If you are having Entonox then the nurse will explain to you how to use it. There is a nurse at your side at all times to reassure you.

The endoscopist will examine your rectum with their finger prior to passing the camera into your bowel. The endoscope will be gently inserted into your bowel and air will be slowly introduced into the bowel to allow the tube to be passed along more easily and enable the endoscopist to get the best possible views of the bowel lining. There may be some mild to moderate discomfort (wind like pain). This occurs as the scope is introduced and the bowel inflated with air.

You may also get the sensation of wanting to go to the toilet, but as the bowel is empty, this will not happen. You may pass some wind. Although this may be embarrassing for you, it is encouraged as it will relieve discomfort.

The endoscopist may take some biopsies (tissue samples) or remove polyps during the procedure but this should not cause you any pain.

Please be advised that sedation means you **must** have

- **Someone to take you home**
- **You should not travel on public transport**
- **You will need someone to stay with you for you 24 hours after the test**
- **You must not drink alcohol, operate machinery, sign legal documents or drive for 24 hours after the test**

## **What happens after the procedure?**

You will be transferred to our recovery area and will rest quietly on a trolley cared for by the nurses until the effects of the sedation have worn off. You may feel a little bloated but this will settle quickly. Your heart rate, oxygen levels and blood pressure will continue to be monitored for a short while.

You will then get dressed, your cannula removed and you will be able to have a drink and biscuits. A nurse will explain the results of the procedure and give you written discharge information. You will need to have a responsible adult collect you and stay with you for 24 hours because of the lasting effects of the sedation.

If you have Entonox you should be able to go home about 30 minutes after the procedure if you feel well.

You will be given a discharge information / advice sheet when you go home **If biopsies were taken during your procedure or if we refer you for another investigation to your local hospital then you will receive a letter from the Eastwood Community Endoscopy Centre informing you of the results.**

**Who do I contact if I have any questions or concerns?**

**Please contact the Endoscopy Unit on 01702 524984**

**Opening hours Monday – Saturday 8am to 6pm excluding Sundays and Bank Holidays**

**During these hours a clinician or nurse will be available to speak to you.**

or

**In case of an emergency please contact your GP, call NHS 111 or attend your local A/E Department.**