

Colonoscopy Information Sheet

What is a Colonoscopy?

Colonoscopy is an inspection of the large bowel by a specialised instrument called a colonoscope.

How to prepare?

Prior to the colonoscopy you will be provided with a preparation that will clean out the bowel and allow for good views.

What we do?

You will be given a sedative drug through a vein in the hand to make you more comfortable during the procedure. The colonoscope is a long and highly flexible tube about the thickness of your index finger. It is inserted through the rectum and allows for inspection of the whole large intestine. As cancer of the large bowel arises from pre-existing polyps (benign wart-like growths) it is recommended that all polyps found are removed at the time of the colonoscopy. Most polyps can be burnt off by placing a wire snare around the base and applying an electrical current (polypectomy). However, because you will be sedated, it is not possible to discuss this with you at the time of procedure. Therefore it is important that you know this beforehand.

Safety and Risks

Complications of colonoscopy are uncommon. Most surveys report complications at 1 in 1000 procedures or less. Complications which are uncommon, but can occur include:

- Intolerance to bowel preparation
- Reaction to sedatives
- Perforation (making a hole in the bowel)
- Bleeding from the bowel

Death is a remote possibility with any interventional procedure. If you wish to have full details of rare complications, you should indicate to your doctor before the procedure that you wish for all possible complications to be fully discussed.

Following the procedure

The sedative that you are given for the procedure may affect your memory and judgment therefore it is important to note:

YOU MUST NOT DRIVE, OPERATE MACHINERY, RETURN TO WORK OR SIGN ANY IMPORTANT DOCUMENTS FOR 24HOURS AFTER YOUR COLONOSCOPY.

It is advisable, therefore, to have a reliable adult drive you home after the procedure and be with you that evening. If no-one is available you may go home by taxi-cab (not public transport) as long as the medical staff are satisfied that you are alert and well enough.

If you have, severe abdominal pain, bleeding from the back passage, fever or any other symptoms that concern you, **please contact us immediately: Dr. Pianko, Dr. Knight, Dr. Dev & Dr. Ratnam.**

Telephone: 9595 6666 and Pager: 9387 1000

If you have any problems contacting us, please see your local doctor, or go to the nearest hospital.

I _____ (insert name), HAVE READ AND UNDERSTAND THIS INFORMATION

I HAVE BEEN GIVEN THE OPPORTUNITY TO ASK QUESTIONS

Signed _____ Date _____