

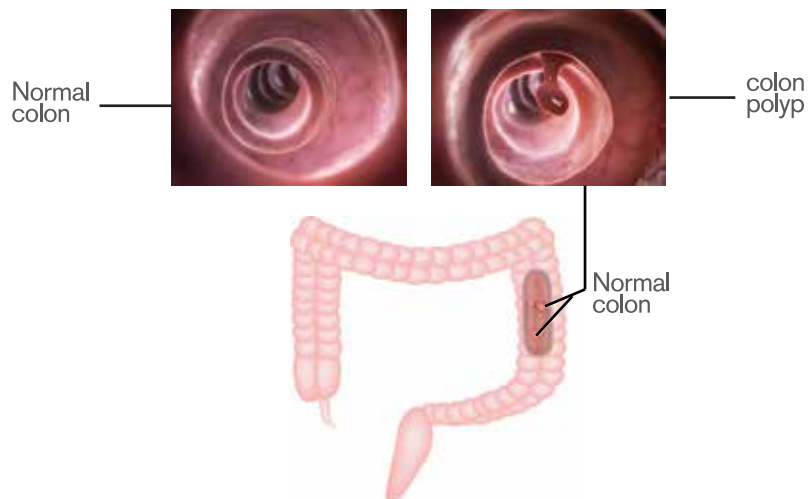
## What is a colonoscopy?

Colonoscopy is a procedure which enables a physician to directly image and examine the entire colon through a colonoscope. A colonoscope is a flexible and steerable instrument (tube) used to evaluate the entire colon (large intestine).



## What are the uses of colonoscopy?

Colonoscopy is effective in the diagnosis and/or evaluation of various gastrointestinal disorders. For example it can be used to evaluate symptoms such as rectal bleeding, abdominal pain, change in bowel habits (diarrhea, constipation). Other conditions like colon polyps, colon cancer, inflammatory bowel disease (Ulcerative colitis, Crohn disease) can be diagnosed during a colonoscopy.



## What is the advantage of colonoscopy over other available tests?

A key advantage of this technique is that it allows both imaging of abnormal findings and also therapy or removal of these abnormalities during the same examination. This procedure is particularly helpful for identification and removal of precancerous polyps.

## Is colonoscopy painful, will I be sedated?

No, colonoscopy is usually not painful! Almost all colonoscopies can be performed using "intravenous conscious sedation" (also known as twilight sedation) in which you are very drowsy, sleepy, and comfortable. Your doctor can discuss with you the best form of sedation to suit your needs.

## How do I prepare for a colonoscopy?

A clean colon is essential to allow for a careful examination for polyps or other abnormalities. There are a variety of preparation methods for colonoscopy.

The most common preparation used involves drinking multiple doses of laxatives that will cause diarrhea that effectively empties the colon of its contents. Usually you will have clear liquids the day before the colonoscopy. You are encouraged to drink a lot of fluids and to continue clear liquids up until 2 to 3 hours before your scheduled procedure.

## Are there any complications from colonoscopy?

Colonoscopy has been found to be extremely safe when performed by a well-trained physician. Although extremely rare, complications can occur and may be related to sedation administration (cardiac and respiratory problems) or to injury to the colon during performance of the test (torn colon, bleeding). In the vast majority of cases, the benefits of the procedure outweigh the minimal risk of complications.



### When can I get the results of the colonoscopy?

Once you wake up (typically within 30 minutes of completion of the procedure), the physician will provide you the preliminary results. If biopsies (pieces of tissues) were taken or polyps were removed, they are usually sent to the laboratory and the results are back in 2 to 3 days.

### What to expect after the colonoscopy?

You'll need someone to take you home because it can take up to a day for the full effects of the sedative to wear off (you may feel drowsy and sleepy for several hours). Don't drive or make important decisions or go back to work for the rest of the day. You may feel bloated or pass gas for a few hours after the exam, as you clear the air from your colon. Walking may help relieve any discomfort.



## Colonoscopy

For any questions or clarifications do not hesitate to call your doctor or call Endoscopy unit

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### What you need to know

