

Colonoscopy

What Is a Colonoscopy?

A colonoscopy is an outpatient exam that is performed while you are lightly sedated. This procedure enables your doctor to examine the colon (large intestine) and remove a polyp or polyps, if necessary. The procedure takes 15-30 minutes and is rarely remembered by the sedated patient.

What Occurs During the exam?

A flexible colonoscope is inserted into the rectum and beyond. In most cases, the colonoscope can be inserted throughout the entire extent of the large intestine permitting a complete examination.

What Are the Reasons for a Colonoscopy?

Colonoscopy is used to identify the following:

1. Polyps – small growths which may become malignant with the passage of time. We believe polyps should be removed. At times, a polyp is discovered unexpectedly during a colonoscopy being done for other reasons; we therefore have all patients give us permission ahead of time to remove polyps if they are discovered.
2. Colitis (Ulcerative or Crohn's) – chronic, recurrent inflammation of the colon.
3. Diverticulosis and Diverticulitis – pockets along the intestinal wall that develop over time and can become infected or bleed.
4. Bleeding Lesions – bleeding may occur from different points in the colon or from evaluation of occult bleeding.
5. Chronic diarrhea, constipation, or a change in bowel habits.
6. Abnormal x-ray exams
7. Anemia
8. Colon cancer – personal or family history.
9. Abdominal pain and discomfort.

Are There Possible Risks?

Colonoscopy is safe and associated with very low risk. The possible risks include perforation of the colon, hemorrhage from the colon, or from a removed polyp or lesion, and side effects due to the anesthesia given.

When Will I Get the Results of the Colonoscopy?

After the exam, your doctor will explain the findings to you and your family. If a biopsy has been performed or a polyp removed, the results may be available for 3 to 7 days. Our office will call you the next day to see how you are feeling. We strongly recommend that you call us if you have any questions at (718) 336-9100.