

Colonoscopy



CANTERBURY
Endoscopy & Gastroenterology

What is a Colonoscopy?

A colonoscopy is a procedure that enables your doctor to look at the lining of your large bowel (colon) using a thin flexible tube (colonoscope), to detect any abnormalities such as inflammation or pre-cancerous growths like polyps.



Watch Colonoscopy explainer video here

Before the Procedure

Medications

Most medications can be taken as usual with a small mouthful of water.

If you are on blood-thinning medications such as warfarin, rivaroxaban, dabigatran, clopidogrel, dipyridamole or ticagrelor - please contact us as soon as possible for further instructions, as these may need to be with-held prior to colonoscopy.

If you are taking Empagliflozin (Jardiance or Jardiamet) or Dapagliflozin (Forxiga), please do not take this the day before, on the morning of your procedure.

If you are taking insulin, please contact us as soon as possible for further instructions.

Bowel preparation

For the procedure to be successful, it is important that your bowel is as empty as possible, to allow clear view at colonoscopy.

3 days before colonoscopy

Start “Low-Fibre” diet, which helps in adequate cleansing of your bowel. It is important to avoid any foods containing seeds / pips, such as kiwi-fruit, passion-fruit, grapes, tomatoes, multigrain bread etc. Following food choices are generally recommended:

Dairy & alternatives	Milk (all types), plain yogurt (no fruit/syrups), cheese, butter, margarine, sour cream, custard, vanilla ice cream.
Grains & Starches	White bread/toast, white rice, rice noodles, regular pasta, white crackers, Rice Bubbles, white muffins.
Proteins	Chicken breast (no skin), white fish, tuna, salmon, egg whites, tofu.
Vegetables & Fruits	Peeled potatoes (boiled, mashed, or baked—no skin), pumpkin, Bananas
Condiments	Mayonnaise, salt, white pepper, vegetable oils, white cream-based sauces.
Sweets	White chocolate, lemonade icy poles.
Beverages	Water, lemonade, tea/coffee (milk is okay), apple juice, white grape juice, yellow Gatorade.

The day before colonoscopy

If your colonoscopy is scheduled before 12 pm

On day before colonoscopy, you may have an early breakfast, then have clear fluids only after 8 AM

If your colonoscopy is scheduled after 1pm

On day before colonoscopy, you may have an early lunch, then have clear fluids only after 12 PM

We recommend clear liquids that are transparent enough to see through. You may have still water, black coffee, or herbal teas, clear apple or orange juice and orange or lime-flavored electrolyte drinks (like Gatorade, or Powerade). For savory options, consider clear broth, bouillon, or strained miso / chicken soup. You may also enjoy yellow-colored jelly and yellow or orange barley sugars.

At 5 PM the day before the procedure, take first picosalax sachet mixed in 300ml of water, followed by atleast 3 cups of 300ml clear fluid of your choice.

At 8 PM the day before the procedure, take first picosalax sachet mixed in 300ml of water, followed by atleast 3 cups of 300ml clear fluid of your choice.

At 4 AM on the day before the procedure, take second picosalax sachet mixed in 300ml of water, followed by atleast 3 cups of 300ml clear fluid of your choice.

At 8 AM on the day before the procedure, take second picosalax sachet mixed in 300ml of water, followed by atleast 3 cups of 300ml clear fluid of your choice.

Clear fluids may be consumed until 2 hours before the procedure is due

On the day of the procedure

Please arrive 30 minutes before your appointment time to allow admission and pre-procedure checks. You will be asked to change in to a comfortable gown.

You will then be transferred to endoscopy suite and asked to lie on left side. Sedatives are then administered in to your veins to keep you relaxed and comfortable. It has a mild amnesia-like effect, so you may not remember having the procedure at all.

The flexible tube (colonoscope) is then be advanced through the rectum and your large bowel is assessed. If polyps are found, these can be removed at the same time. Other biopsies may be obtained as required.

The procedure takes about 30 minutes.

After the procedure

After the procedure, you will be taken to the recovery area. You will be monitored by nurses, and once your sedation wears off, a choice of light refreshments will be offered.

Dr. Lamba will come and discuss the preliminary results with you, and provide you a copy of the report.

The biopsies can take up to 2 weeks to be reported. If polyps were removed, or biopsies obtained during the procedure, a final report will be sent following this.

You would need someone to drive you home, and care for you 24 hours after the procedure.

The sedation makes you feel forgetful, and impairs your judgement and reflexes. Even if you feel alert after the procedure, please do not:

- Drive a car.
- Operate machinery.
- Drink alcohol
- Sign any legal documents

Risks of Colonoscopy

While complications during a standard colonoscopy are rare, they can occasionally occur especially if a procedure involves an intervention, such as removing a polyp. In very rare cases (approximately 1 in 1,000 procedures), a small tear or perforation may occur, which could require hospital care, antibiotics, or surgery.

Reactions to sedation are rare.

Despite best efforts, there is a small possibility that some conditions may be missed during the exam. If your symptoms continue after your procedure, please contact your doctor for further review.



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