



COLONOSCOPY

ESSENTIAL INFORMATION FOR PATIENTS



Beacon Hospital
ENDOSCOPY

COLONOSCOPY

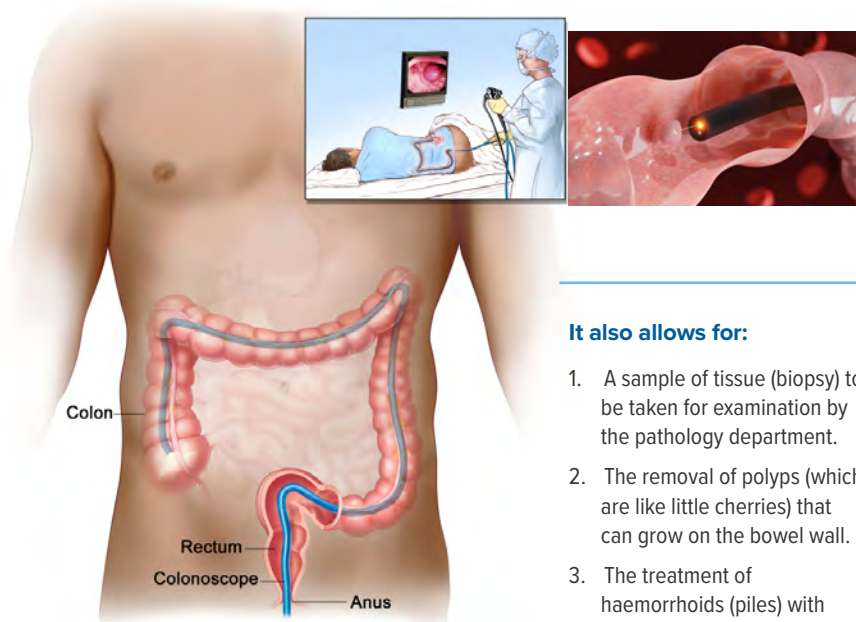
ESSENTIAL INFORMATION FOR PATIENTS

What Is A Colonoscopy?

A colonoscopy is a procedure that allows the endoscopist to look directly at the lining of the large bowel or (colon). It is performed using a thin tube (colonoscope) with a camera and a light on the tip which is used to look at the area being examined.

The procedure is the most accurate way we have of looking at the large bowel (colon) to establish whether any disease is present.

COLONOSCOPY



It also allows for:

1. A sample of tissue (biopsy) to be taken for examination by the pathology department.
2. The removal of polyps (which are like little cherries) that can grow on the bowel wall.
3. The treatment of haemorrhoids (piles) with banding or injection of oily phenol.

Getting Ready For The Procedure

You will need to fast for 24 hours prior to your procedure time to ensure your bowel is empty. You can drink water up to 2 hours before the procedure time.

Preparing Your Bowel

To obtain a clear view, the bowel must be completely empty, so that the doctor can complete a thorough examination. You will be prescribed a bowel prep by your doctor. Please follow the additional advice for bowel prep instructions.



Medication

Regular medication with the exception of those listed below can be taken on the morning of the procedure

Please take your regular medication at least 3 hours before your appointment time with water only.

- **Iron Tablets** – These will need to be stopped one week before the procedure – as the iron makes your faeces look black in colour, which can be mistaken for blood in the bowel during the examination.
- If you are **diabetic** you will require specific instructions from the endoscopy nurses, if you have not received this please call the endoscopy Unit on 01 650 4617.
- If you are prescribed any of the following medication please call the endoscopy unit for advice on 01 650 4617
– **Aspirin, Warfarin, Clopidrogel, (Plavix), Rivaroxaban (Xaralto), Dabigatran (Pradaxa), Apixaban (Eliquis)**
- If you use a GTN spray for angina – please bring this with you.
- If you are asthmatic – please bring your inhalers with you.
- Please bring a list detailing your regular medications. If you are in doubt, please contact your GP or local pharmacy to provide the list.

It is important to seek advice and guidance from a Doctor or a nurse before stopping any medications. If you take Warfarin or Plavix, please contact the Endoscopy Department at least one week prior to your procedure so we can advise.

Sedation

To ensure you are comfortable and will be able to tolerate the procedure, sedation is offered.

There are three options available to you:

1. Intravenous Sedation also known as Conscious Sedation

For a colonoscopy most patients choose to have sedation.

You will be given an intravenous injection into a vein to make you feel relaxed and sleepy but not unconscious (**this is not a general anaesthetic**).

- You will need to stay in the unit whilst you recover which may take up to two hours or more.
- Sedation has an amnesia effect therefore you may not remember the procedure after.
- The injection may continue to have a mild sedative effect for up to 24 hours. Which can cause drowsiness and unsteady gait.
- You must arrange someone to escort you home and stay with you for 12 hours after the procedure.
- You must not drive or operate heavy machinery for 24 hours.
- **If you do not have an escort home then your procedure will be cancelled.**

2. Entonox Sedation

- Entonox or Equanox is sometimes referred to as 'laughing gas' or 'gas and air'. Entonox is a 50/50 mixture of nitrous oxide and oxygen gas and is commonly used in childbirth and by the ambulance service for the relief of pain.

- Entonox works very quickly and its effects are felt almost immediately after inhalation. It provides very good pain relief and has a relaxing effect without losing consciousness or control.
- Entonox can be used as an alternative to intravenous sedation and pain relief for endoscopic procedures examining the bowel such as colonoscopy and flexible sigmoidoscopy.
- After inhalation has stopped, the gas and its effects wear off within eight minutes. For this reason, you will not need anyone to look after you for twelve hours afterwards.

- You can be discharged home 1-hour post procedure if Entonox is used as sedation.
- Please see additional patient information leaflet on Entonox.

3. No sedation

- You will be fully aware of the procedure which most patients find acceptable.
- You can drive after this procedure with no sedation and you will not need an escort home.

On Arrival

- On arrival at the hospital, go to the Endoscopy reception area on the second floor.
- The receptionist will take some information regarding your personal contact details.
- You will be admitted to the unit by a nurse who will ask information regarding your health history.
- You will be given a hospital gown and disposable underwear for the procedure.
- A small tube called a cannula will be put into a vein.
- Once the admission assessment is completed by the nurse, you will be brought to a seated waiting area, where the nurse from the procedure room will collect you.
- Please bring a dressing gown and slippers with you. Please do not bring any valuables, including jewellery or money into hospital with you.

Consent

Before a Doctor completes your procedure, they will need to gain your consent. The Doctor will discuss the procedure and the risks involved. Any questions or concerns should be raised at this time. You will then be asked to sign the consent form. If you later change your mind, you are entitled to withdraw consent even after signing the document.

- Please read this patient information leaflet, prior to signing your consent form.
- Please read the consent form in full, prior to your procedure.



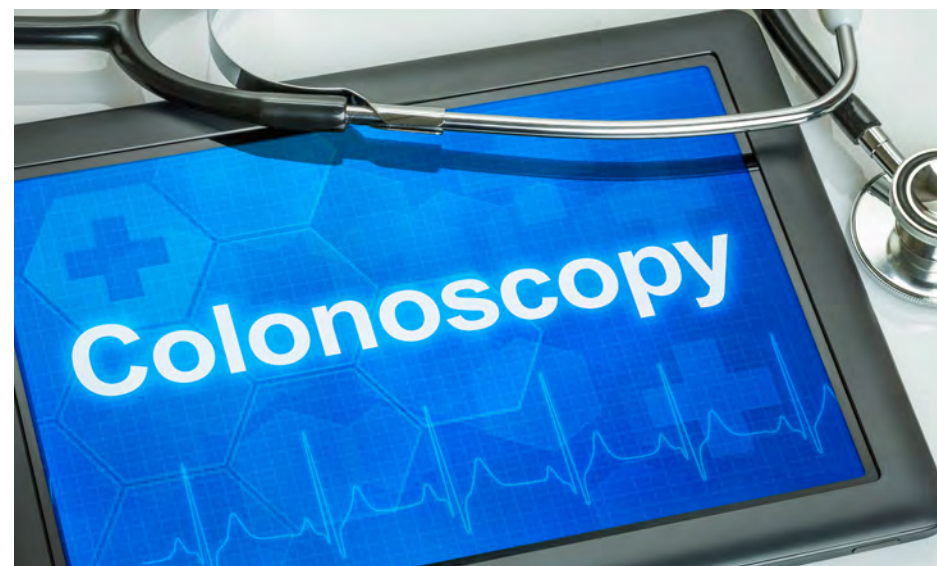
During your Procedure

- In the procedure room, you will be made comfortable on the bed, lying on your left side with your knees drawn up.
- You will be able to see the endoscopy screen in front of you.
- You will receive oxygen through your nose.
- Monitoring equipment will be placed on your finger and on your arm to monitor your vital signs.
- Sedation will be administered through your cannula at this point.
- The endoscopist will gently pass the scope in through your back passage.
- A nurse and doctor will ensure that you are feeling comfortable throughout the procedure.
- Air will be passed into the bowel via the scope, this may cause you some discomfort but will pass quickly.
- Sometimes routine small samples are taken (biopsies), these are about the size of a pin head and are not painful.
- The procedure takes approximately 30-40 minutes – however it may take longer if biopsies need to be taken or polyps need to be removed.

After your Procedure

- You will be brought to the Endoscopy recovery area, on your bed.
- Your vital signs will be monitored by a registered nurse.
- You will be recovered here for approx. 30 mins.
- Following your procedure, you may experience some crampy pains and bloating. This is due to trapped flatus, you are encouraged to pass the flatus, as this relieves the pain and aids your recovery.
- Once you are alert and the sedation has worn off, you will be assisted to dress.
- You will be escorted by a nurse to a chair in the Endoscopy discharge lounge. Here you will be given light diet and fluids.
- Your escort should collect you from the Endoscopy Discharge area also located on the 2nd floor.

- Your cannula will be removed from your hand or arm once you have had something to eat, and are not experiencing any side effects from the procedure or medications.
- It is the decision of the consultant performing the test if he/she will be seeing you immediately following the test or if an appointment will be made in the outpatient rooms.
- The consultant's secretary will arrange this appointment for you if needed.
- A nurse will speak to you about the outcome of the procedure and explain the report.
- You will be given instructions before discharge and a number to contact the unit and an out of hours contact number.
- Any biopsies or polyps removed are sent to the laboratory for analysis to assist the doctor in diagnosis.
- We will send a copy of the Endoscopy report to your GP and any lab results should follow within 3-4 weeks.
- Any advice or recommended further tests will be given upon discharge.



Potential Risks

- **Failure of the Procedure:**

Colonoscopy is usually a very successful procedure, allowing the whole colon to be visualised in over 90% of procedures. Occasionally it may not be possible to advance the scope all the way around your colon and further tests such as a scan or X-ray may be required instead.

- **Drug Reaction:**

The sedation used for the procedure is safe with only a very slight risk of reaction. Your Heart rate and blood pressure will be monitored at all times, by a nurse and the Consultant throughout your procedure.

- **Bleeding:**

If a polyp is found during the procedure, this may be removed, which can result in some bleeding. This bleeding can often be stopped straight away but may occasionally be more serious or may even occur a few days later. Depending on the size, the risk of bleeding is 1 in 200 polyps removed. Many polyps are the type which can turn into cancer if left untreated for a long period of time and removing them when still benign eliminates the risk.

- **Perforation:**

If you do not have polyps removed there is a less than 1 in 2000 chance of causing a perforation, which is a little tear in the lining of the bowel wall. If polyps are removed, this may occur in 1 in 500 cases. This may extend your hospital stay for a short time and you will need to be given antibiotics, or it may require further intervention.

- **Missed Pathology:**

It is important to remember that no test is perfect and even with complete examination, a significant disease may be missed in up to 20% of cases.

Frequently Asked Questions

- ▶ **The symptoms have stopped before my colonoscopy, should I still come for the test?**

Yes. It is important that you still come for the test.

- ▶ **Does the procedure hurt?**

You may feel some discomfort from the air that is pumped into the bowel but these exams are not painful.

- ▶ **Can I drive after the procedure?**

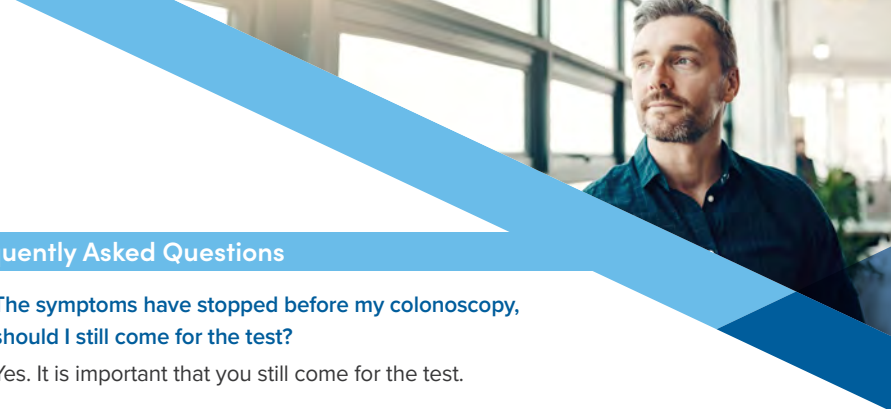
No, you may not drive for 24 hours post sedation. You must have organised an escort home for the day of the procedure. You will not be permitted to leave the department unaccompanied.

- ▶ **How long will my length of stay be in the hospital?**

From registration to discharge we aim for your length of stay to be 4 hours or less.

- ▶ **Can I cancel/reschedule my procedure?**

Our Endoscopy Department clinics are extremely busy and fully booked. If you need to cancel or reschedule your appointment we ask you do so at least four days in advance by contacting our scheduling team on 01 293 8656. This way, we may be able to offer your slot to another patient waiting on an appointment.





Beacon Hospital
Sandyford
Dublin 18
D18 AK68

Tel: 01 293 6600

www.beaconhospital.ie

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