

# After your colonoscopy

(for bowel cancer screening patient)

Bowel Cancer Screening Nurse – Tel: 01271 314099

Gemini Endoscopy Suite – Tel: 01271 349180

## Other formats

If you need this information in another format such as audio CD, Braille, large print, high contrast, British Sign Language or translated into another language, please contact the PALS desk on 01271 314090 or at [ndht.pals@nhs.net](mailto:ndht.pals@nhs.net).

## What happens now?

A bowel cancer screening practitioner will give you a courtesy call tomorrow. You will be advised of any results and any possible follow-up in approximately one week's time.

## Recovering from your colonoscopy

Drugs used for sedation remain in the body for at least 24 hours and gradually wear off. During this period, although you may feel wide awake, you will still be under the influence of the sedation. Your concentration and co-ordination may be impaired and you may feel light-headed or faint.

It is very important to observe the following instructions:

- If you have had sedation, a responsible person should accompany you home and stay with you for 12 hours or overnight.
- Do not drive a car or other vehicle – your insurance is invalid for the 24-hour period – or operate machinery for 24 hours
- You should not sign any legally-binding agreements for 24 hours or make important decisions
- Do not drink alcohol for 24 hours
- Do not lock the bathroom or toilet door, or make yourself inaccessible to the person looking after you
- Drink plenty of fluids

## Common side-effects

- Mild bloating/wind pain  
You may experience some bloating/wind discomfort as your bowel has been inflated with air during your procedure, but this usually settles quickly. To help relieve this you may like to try some of the following: walking around, drinking warm fluids, lying on your left-hand side with your knees up and a hot water bottle on your tummy.
- 'Spotting' from your back passage  
During your procedure you may have had polyps removed or biopsies taken, and as a result you may experience spots of blood for a day or two.

## Infrequent side-effects

- Severe abdominal pain (not cramp caused by trapped wind)
- A firm-to-touch and swollen abdomen
- Passing a sudden and large amount of blood (more than half a tea cup full) from your back passage
- A high temperature (greater than 38 degrees)
- Vomiting

If you experience any of these during the 48-hour period after your colonoscopy, you can ask for help from:

- Your own GP
- Accident and Emergency Department (anytime)
- Gemini Endoscopy Suite – **01271 349180** (Monday – Friday, 8am – 6pm)
- North Devon District Hospital – **01271 322577**
- Screening Practitioner (NDDH) – **01271 314099** (Tuesday – Thursday, 8am – 6pm)
- Screening Practitioners (RDE) – **01392 404645** (Monday – Friday, 8am – 6pm)

## Reporting side-effects

As the more-severe side-effects are unusual, we would be grateful if you could let us know if you believe you have suffered from one that is related to your colonoscopy, so we can monitor our service and continually strive to improve it:

- Excessive bleeding from your bottom following the procedure ('spotting' is OK)
- Pain (in excess of 'windy' pains, which are normal after a colonoscopy)
- An unexpected visit/admission to hospital relating to the colonoscopy in the next **30 days**

**Please contact us in the following ways, providing us with the information requested in the table below:**

Post: Lead Bowel Cancer Screening Nurse/ Programme Manager, Bowel Cancer Screening, East Cottage, Royal Devon and Exeter Hospital, Barrack Road, Exeter, EX2 5DW

Telephone: 01392 404645

Thank you

Your Initials	
Date of Colonoscopy	
Site of Colonoscopy (Please tick site)	<input type="checkbox"/> Royal Devon and Exeter Hospital <input type="checkbox"/> Northern Devon District Hospital
Date of adverse effect	
Details of adverse effect	
Did you see or speak to a health professional about the adverse effect? If so, whom? Where? What was the outcome?	

## Medications

You may resume normal medications after your colonoscopy, unless advised otherwise.

If a polyp was removed, do not take aspirin for a week afterwards.

**If you take blood thinning medications, please restart them on.....**

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## PALS

The Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) ensures that the NHS listens to patients, relatives, carers and friends, answers questions and resolves concerns as quickly as possible. If you have a query or concern call 01271 314090 or email [ndht.pals@nhs.net](mailto:ndht.pals@nhs.net). You can also visit the PALS and Information Centre in person at North Devon District Hospital, Barnstaple.

## Have your say

Royal Devon University Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust aims to provide high quality services. However, please tell us when something could be improved. If you have a comment or compliment about a service or treatment, please raise your comments with a member of staff or the PALS team in the first instance.

'Care Opinion' comments forms are on all wards or online at [www.careopinion.org.uk](http://www.careopinion.org.uk).

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