

Having a Colonoscopy

Gemini Endoscopy Suite
Tel: 01271 349180

Patient's name:

Hospital No:

Your appointment is at on

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.

This leaflet will answer many of your questions about your colonoscopy. However, if you would like to speak to someone, please contact the Gemini Endoscopy Suite on 01271 349180.

Why is a colonoscopy needed?

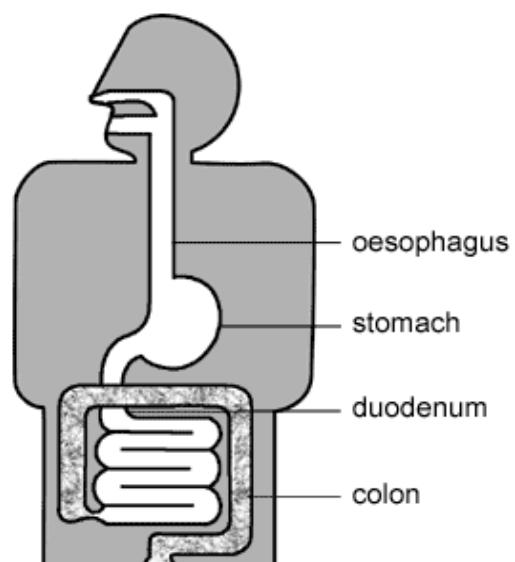
This examination allows us to look directly at the colon (large bowel). This means we can check whether any disease is present and will help us find the cause of your symptoms.

What does it involve?

A colonoscope is a thin, flexible tube, with a camera at the end. It is passed through your rectum (back passage) into your colon. There are medications you can choose to help you through your colonoscopy. These include:

Sedation: this is not an anaesthetic, so will not put you to sleep. Sedation is given to help you to relax during the procedure. You may be aware of what is happening but should feel comfortable. You may not remember having the procedure, as the sedation can affect your short-term memory. It will not have a long term or permanent effect.

Pain relief: this can be an injection (analgesia) or gas & air (Entonox).



You may choose to have one or more of these. Some patients choose to have no medications at all.

Sometimes a small amount of tissue (biopsy) may need to be taken from a particular area for further examination in the laboratory. The tissue is removed using tiny forceps passed through the colonoscope. This is usually painless. However, you may feel a tugging sensation. During the test, photographs of your bowel may be taken.

When you come to the department, a nurse will discuss the test with you. This is to ensure that you understand what the test involves. If you have any questions or worries, don't be afraid to ask.

How to find us

The Gemini Endoscopy Suite is located on Level 0 at the North Devon District Hospital in Barnstaple.

If you come in through the main hospital entrance, use the lifts or stairs to go down to Level 0. On leaving the lift turn right and head for the link corridor. The corridor forms a 'crossroad' – take the right turn and follow the corridor up to a double set of doors, through the doors and the Gemini Endoscopy Suite is on your left.

If you come in from the Endoscopy Drop-off Zone, you will need to walk between the building and the small grey building to find a blue door on your right. Go through the blue door and the entrance to the Gemini Endoscopy suite is directly opposite.

Special precautions

If you are taking any of the following medications and this has not been discussed at pre-assessment, please contact the Gemini Endoscopy Suite, as soon as possible, on 01271 349180 before you come into hospital.

- **Warfarin**
- **Rivaroxaban**
- **Dabigatran**
- **Edoxaban**
- **Apixaban**
- **Clopidogrel**
- **Prasugrel**
- **Ticagrelor**

If you are a diabetic and on medication (insulin or tablets), you may need to adjust your dose. For advice, please contact the Diabetic Liaison Nurse on 01271 322726 or contact the Gemini Endoscopy Suite.

If you are taking oral contraceptives, you should take extra precautions as bowel prep may reduce the effectiveness.

If you have any allergies or have had a bad reaction to drugs or other tests, please tell the nurse on admission and/or doctor.

Please follow these steps to prepare for your colonoscopy

To ensure an empty bowel and a complete examination, please follow our advice carefully.

Five days before colonoscopy

Please avoid foods containing small seeds. These include granary or multi-seeded bread, crisp breads, cereals containing seeds such as muesli, granola, and fruits such as raspberries and strawberries.

If you take iron tablets or medications to control diarrhoea, please stop taking them until after your colonoscopy. You should continue to take any other medications, including laxatives.

After your pre-assessment your bowel prep will be sent to you via the post. **Please read the instructions for taking the bowel prep enclosed.**

Four days before your procedure

Please have this **low residue diet** four days prior to your procedure until you are told to stop eating.

|  Choose |  Avoid |
|--|---|
| Flour: | |
| White | Wholemeal or granary flour, wheatgerm |
| Fruit and vegetables: | |
| Potatoes – boiled, mashed or chipped – no skin | All fruit and vegetables (including mushrooms) |
| Savouries: | |
| Chicken, turkey, fish, cheese, eggs, shellfish and tofu | All red meats |
| Puddings, pastries, cakes etc: | |
| Milk pudding, mousse, sponge cake, madeira cake, rich tea biscuits or wafer biscuits | Those containing wholemeal flour, oatmeal, nuts, dried fruit (eg. fruit cake), Ryvita, digestive or Hobnobs biscuits, rice and/or corn cakes |
| Dairy and dairy alternatives: | |
| All dairy, nut, hemp and pea milks All dairy and coconut based yogurt and ice cream (without fruit/nut pieces) Butter, margarine and spreads | Oat and soya milk, soya based yogurt and ice cream |
| Preserves, confectionary, crisps: | |
| Sugar, jam, marmalade, honey, syrup, lemon curd, plain chocolate (no fruit and/or nuts), corn based crisps (eg. Wotsits) | Jam or marmalade with pips, skin and seeds, sweets and chocolates containing nuts and/or fruit, muesli bars Potato, lentil or pea based crisps |
| Soups: | |
| Clear and sieved | Chunky vegetable, lentil or bean soups |

| Choose | Avoid |
|--|---|
| Cereals: | |
| Cornflakes, Rice Krispies, Ricicles, Frosties, Sugar Puffs, Coco Pops | Wheat bran, All Bran, Weetabix, Shredded Wheat, oat bran, bran flakes, wheat flakes, muesli, Ready Brek, porridge |
| Bread: | |
| White | Wholemeal, high fibre white, soft grain, granary or oat bread |
| Pasta, grains, legumes/pulses, noodles : | |
| White pasta, rice and noodles | Wholemeal pasta and noodles, brown rice, quinoa, oats, pearl barley, buckwheat, lentils, beans, chickpeas, split peas, couscous, semolina |
| Miscellaneous: | |
| Salt, pepper, vinegar, mustard, salad cream, mayonnaise, boiled sweets, glucose tablets, mints | Nuts, quorn, fresh ground peppercorns, hummus |

One day before colonoscopy

Stop eating as per your instructions. You may continue to drink, from the list below, during this time.

- The effects of the bowel prep may give you a sore bottom. To help prevent this, use a barrier cream such as Sudocrem, zinc and castor oil, or any type of nappy cream. Apply the cream to the appropriate area before starting the bowel prep. Use moist toilet / baby wipes to clean with. These can also be stored in the fridge to provide a soothing effect if soreness occurs.

Permitted fluids

It is important to drink plenty of clear fluids in addition to the bowel prep. Drinks might include:

- All types of water
- Lucozade or any other sports drinks
- Tea, coffee (little or no milk), fruit & herbal teas
- Fizzy drinks eg. Coke, ginger beer, tonic water
- Clear fruit juice - apple, cranberry, red/white grape juice, **not orange juice**
- Any fruit squashes
- Hot honey & lemon
- Oxo, Marmite, Bovril
- Consommé/clear soup

You can also have:

- Jellies (not red coloured)
- Any sugar-based sweets eg. Jelly babies, fruit pastels, wine gums, Polos, dextrose tablets.

The day of your colonoscopy

On the day of your examination continue to drink clear fluids until 2 hours prior to your appointment time you will remain **nil by mouth** until after your procedure.

What to bring

- Phone numbers for your Next of kin and the person collecting you (if different)
- Dressing gown and slippers. Please wear a sleeveless or short-sleeved top, which you can keep on throughout the procedure.
- A list of/or any tablets or medicines you are taking, including supplements and herbal remedies
- Your reading glasses

Please wear minimal jewellery, make-up or nail varnish for this appointment.

Do not bring any valuables with you, as we cannot take responsibility for any losses.

What will happen during the test?

A small plastic tube, canula, will be placed in to a vein in your arm or hand. This is used to give you analgesia (pain relief) and/or a sedative to make you more relaxed and sleepy.

You will be asked to lie on your left side on the trolley and made as comfortable as possible. A probe will be placed on your finger and a blood pressure cuff put on your arm. This is to monitor your pulse and blood pressure during the procedure, and is routine.

The doctor will then pass the colonoscope gently into your rectum (back passage) and then proceed on to your colon (large bowel). The examination usually takes about 20-40 minutes.

You will be closely monitored for signs of discomfort or pain throughout the procedure. We encourage you to tell us, at the time, so we can act upon this information and reduce any discomfort by a variety of means.

What should I expect after the test?

After the examination, you will be taken to the recovery area, where you will be able to rest and relax. You will feel the need to pass quite a lot of 'wind' from your bowels. This may last for about 12 hours and is quite normal after this procedure. If you have had a biopsy taken (small sample of tissue), you may notice a small amount of blood from your rectum (back passage), either on the toilet paper or in the toilet pan.

You will be offered a hot drink and biscuits, or fruit, once you are dressed. You are welcome to bring your own sandwich or snacks.

What are the possible complications?

This is a safe procedure. However, there are some small risks.

Perforation

It is possible to damage the bowel by making a small hole or tear, called a perforation. The risk of this happening is approximately 1 in 1000 tests. This will usually result in admission to hospital and in some cases an operation to repair the hole.

Bleeding

It is not uncommon to have a small amount of blood loss after biopsies or polyp removal, which normally settles within 24 hours. If the blood loss persists or is excessive you may be admitted to hospital for observation and in some cases an operation and /or blood transfusion. The risk of this happening is approximately 1 in 1000. Bleeding can occur up to 10 days after the procedure.

Missed pathology

A colonoscopy is the best test to examine the large bowel, but we can miss abnormalities, sometimes even important ones. We take great care to minimise this risk as far as humanly possible.

When will I be able to go home?

If you have had sedation or pain relief injection for this examination, you will be able to go home within about 2½ hours of your appointment time. However, it is imperative that someone comes to pick you up from the Gemini Endoscopy Suite (please **do not** use public transport). You should be accompanied home by a responsible adult. If you have had sedation, you must have someone to stay with you for at least 12 hours if you live alone. If this is not possible, then please contact the Gemini Endoscopy Suite.

Once home, it is important to rest quietly for the rest of the day. You can eat and drink normally. However, you must not drink alcohol, drive, sign legal documents or operate machinery for 24 hours. It is also advisable to take the following day off work.

Test results

The results of your test will be given to you and explained before you go home and a copy of the report will be sent to your GP.

Further information

If you are not able to attend for your appointment, please contact the booking team as soon as possible, as we can offer your appointment to another patient.

Doctors and nurses training in Endoscopy at many different levels attend unit or department and will be involved in your care under the direct supervision of experienced consultants and nurses. If you do not wish to be involved in training these experts of the future, please contact the Booking Office.

If you have any queries or concerns about your colonoscopy, please do not hesitate to contact the Gemini Endoscopy Suite.

You can access The Endoscopy Unit webpage on the Northern Devon Healthcare NHS Trust website at www.northdevonhealth.nhs.uk. Go to 'Our services' then 'Endoscopy'. Click on 'Endoscopy FAQ' for more information.

Useful telephone numbers

- Booking Team 01271 370214 (for appointments and cancellations)
- Gemini Endoscopy Suite 01271 349180 (for general enquiries such as medications)
- Mr. Cartmell's secretary 01271 370241
- Mrs. Cross' Secretary 01271 370285
- Ms. Beaton's Secretary 01271 370241
- Dr Moran's Secretary 01271 322734
- Dr Davis's secretary 01271 322447
- Dr Theron's Secretary 01271 322734
- Colorectal Nurse Specialist 01271 322464

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. You can also visit the PALS and Information Centre in person at North Devon District Hospital, Barnstaple.

Have your say

Northern Devon Healthcare NHS 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.

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