



ONE PROFESSIONAL PLAZA  
REXBURG, IDAHO 83440  
208.356.9231  
FAX: 208.356.9141

MICHAEL PACKER, MD  
NICHOLE ROBSON, PAC  
TRAVIS WEISZHAAR, PAC

## What is Colonoscopy?

Colonoscopy is a special test that allows your physician to examine the lining of the colon (large bowel) for abnormal growths such as polyps or cancer, or inflammatory changes such as Crohns disease or Ulcerative Colitis.

## Who should have Colonoscopy?

Your physician may recommend you have a colonoscopy as a screening exam for colon cancer or if you experience symptoms which suggest colon disease such as:

- A change in bowel habits
- Rectal bleeding
- Unexpected abdominal pain
- Inflammatory bowel disease

If polyps or tumors are located with a barium enema X-ray or you have a past, or family history of colon polyps or cancer, you should have a colonoscopy.

## What preparation is required?

The colon must be completely clean for the procedure to be accurate and complete. Your physician will give you detailed instructions regarding the dietary restrictions to be followed and the cleansing routine to be used. Most medications may be continued as usual, but some medications can interfere with the preparation or the examination. Therefore, it is best to inform your physician of your current medications, as well as any allergies to medications.

## How is the procedure performed?

Your doctor may give you medication to help you relax during the procedure. The colonoscope has a camera, as well as a light, on the end which transmits to the video screen. The scope is advanced through the rectum and colon to a total of 3 to 4 feet. If an abnormal area is found, it is possible to biopsy through the scope. Polyps, if they are small enough can be removed by biopsy or electrocautery loop. Very large polyps will be photographed and you will be referred for further evaluation and treatment.

## What are polyps and why are they removed?

Polyps are abnormal growths from the lining of the colon, which vary in size from a tiny dot to several inches. The majority of polyps are benign (non-cancerous), but the doctor cannot always tell a benign polyp from a malignant (cancerous) polyp by its outer appearance alone. For this reason, polyps are removed and sent for analysis.

## What happens after colonoscopy?

The examination usually takes about one hour. After colonoscopy, your physician will explain the results to you. If you have been sedated for the procedure, you will be observed until the effects of the sedation medication have worn off. You will need someone to drive you home after the procedure.

## What are the possible complications of Colonoscopy?

Potential risks may include a perforation or tear through the bowel wall, a reaction to the sedatives used, bleeding from biopsy sites and complications from heart or lung disease. You will likely have discomfort at times, though it will be minimal. Although complications after colonoscopy are uncommon, it is important for you to recognize early signs of any possible complications. Contact the physician who performed the colonoscopy if you notice any of the following symptoms: severe abdominal pains, fevers, chills, or rectal bleeding of more than one-half cup. Bleeding can occur several days after the removal of a polyp.

## Colonoscopy Preparation

It is very important for your colon to be clear of stool before you undergo colonoscopy. There are several ways to do this but they all involve pushing a lot of fluid through your bowels. In other words, expect the bowel cleansing to be one of the more uncomfortable parts of this exam.

There are several products available for the bowel preparation. A few general recommendations:

- **You will need to purchase the Bowel Preparation (requiring a prescription) and a Fleets Enema at the pharmacy.**
- **The day before the exam, it would be helpful to eat light meals. Eating liquid foods that day will make the cleanout easier.** Avoid red or orange Jell-O before the exam.. The dye can appear like blood in the colon making interpretation difficult.
- **Take the prep as directed in the instructions.** Usually you will start in the evening prior to the exam.



- **It is common to have some nausea while drinking the solution.** If it causes you to vomit, wait 30-60 minutes and continue drinking the solution.
- **You will still have loose bowel movements for about 1 to 2 hours after you finish drinking the solution.**
- **You can continue to drink clear liquids all through the night.**
- **Please give yourself the enema about 30 minutes prior to coming for the procedure.**

## Finances

Just a word about medical expense. The fact that we do this procedure in the office represents a large savings to the patient and the insurance company. The procedure costs about \$700, depending on the complexity of the problem, etc... Sometimes insurance companies require pre-authorization for such a procedure and it is the responsibility of the patient to inquire with the insurance company about this need. We will assist in whatever way we can, but the patient is responsible to know whether this test will be covered by the company. In the end, the patient will be billed for any part of the test that is not covered by the insurance company.

## Colonoscopy Discharge Instructions

The procedure you had is called a colonoscopy. Although complications are quite rare, it is helpful if you understand the following:

1. Air has been introduced into your bowel during the procedure. You may feel some distention or bloating until the gas is passed. This should go away in a few hours. If you continue to have a great deal of pain, notify my office immediately.
2. You may pass a small amount of blood with you next bowel movements, especially if biopsies or a polyp removal were done. If you pass large amounts of blood or clots, or if this continues for several days, notify my office immediately.
3. Please contact our office if you have a temperature which exceeds 100.5°. Please take your temperature once this evening.
4. Contact us immediately if you have any sharp or severe pain.
5. You received medication to sedate you. You will feel somewhat sleepy throughout the day and this is normal. You should not drive a vehicle or perform any activity which might be dangerous if you are sedated. I recommend that you rest at home for the remainder of the day.
6. If a biopsy was performed or if a polyp was removed you will be notified in the next few days of the results. You are welcome to call if you have not heard from our office.



## Colonoscopy Consent

The procedure which has been recommended for you is called Colonoscopy. This involves passing a flexible, lighted instrument into your rectum and large intestine. This enables us to look inside your large bowel as the instrument is passed along. Small bits of tissue may be taken from areas that do not appear normal. These bits of tissue are called biopsies. If something appears abnormal, we will be able to take a photograph of the video image, for future reference.

There may be some discomfort as the instrument is passed through your colon. When we maneuver around folds and corners in the bowel, you may feel a sharp pull inside. This will usually subside soon. Much of the discomfort that patients experience is from the air that is pumped into the bowel in order to view the colon well.

To help you relax during the procedure and help with the pain, medications will be used. These are usually given prior to beginning the colonoscopy. These medications may include Versed, Demerol, and Fentanyl. In order to give the medicines, an intravenous line will be started prior to the procedure.

If a polyp or abnormal growth is found, we will attempt to remove it entirely. If it is too large, we will simply biopsy the tissue.

Complications can occur with this procedure and it is important for you to understand the nature of these risks. These include:

- Perforation of the bowel wall (making a hole or tear in the bowel wall) which may require surgery, placement of a colostomy (an external bag for collecting stool), and subsequent complications.
- Reaction to the sedation medicines.
- Bleeding—This is usually limited to biopsy sites and heal spontaneously. If the bleeding persists, you may require hospitalization, transfusion, and further examinations.
- Pain and discomfort
- Infection

Of course, no procedure is without risk. The only way to be 100% free of risk is not to have the procedure done. But we believe that this is a safe procedure and important for screening and diagnosing disease.

Having read the entire education handout and having all my questions answered to my satisfaction, I hereby authorize performance of the procedure called Colonoscopy with possible biopsy and polypectomy to be performed by Dr. Michael Packer and his assistants.

Patient: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_