

Colonoscopy



A colonoscopy is a medical procedure performed to look inside the colon and rectum to detect changes or abnormalities. The procedure is performed with a colonoscope, which has a small camera attached to a flexible tube so that it can reach the entire length of the colon. During the procedure, if necessary, a biopsy may be performed to remove any suspicious-looking areas, such as a polyp.

A colonoscopy is recommended for everyone over 45 years of age, even if there is no risk factor. If there is any risk factor, colonoscopy should be performed earlier and more frequently than recommended for people without risk factors.

Why is colonoscopy important?

Your doctor may recommend a colonoscopy for any of the following reasons:

• **To investigate bowel signs and symptoms:** this procedure helps your doctor explore possible causes of abdominal pain, rectal bleeding, chronic constipation, chronic diarrhea, and other bowel problems. Also, he/she will be able to find the cause of anemia or blood in the stool.

• **Colon cancer screening:** Colonoscopy is an option for colon cancer screening.

• If you have had polyps in the past, your doctor may recommend a follow-up colonoscopy to look for and remove additional polyps.



Preparation for the test

Your intestines need to be empty and clean for the test. Your health care provider will instruct you on the steps for pre-procedure preparation.



These may include:

- Use of enemas.
- Use of laxatives.
- Not consuming solid food for 1 to 3 days prior to the exam. You will probably be able to consume clear liquids such as teas, broths without fat, gelatin, strained fruit juices, and water.

In consultation with the patient, the physician may suggest additional steps, such as an adjustment in medication.

During the procedure

You will be given medicine through your vein to help you relax and not feel pain. You may be conscious during the test and may even be able to talk. Furthermore, you probably will not remember anything about the procedure.



After the procedure

Because of the sedative, you will need someone to accompany you. You should not drive or make important decisions for the rest of the day. You may feel bloated or pass gas for a few hours after the test as you discharge air from your colon. Likewise, you may also notice a small amount of blood in your first bowel movement after the test. If your doctor removed any polyps during the colonoscopy, he or she may recommend that you temporarily follow a special diet.

Colonoscopy results

Negative result: A colonoscopy is considered negative if the doctor finds no abnormalities in the colon. Your doctor may recommend that you have another colonoscopy within 10 years:

- In 10 years, if you have no risk factors for colon cancer.
- In 1 to 7 years, depending on several factors, such as number, size, and type of polyps removed; history of polyps in previous colonoscopies; or family history of colon cancer.

Positive result: A colonoscopy is considered positive if the doctor finds any polyps or abnormal tissue in the colon. Most polyps are not cancerous, but some may be precancerous. Polyps that are removed during colonoscopy are sent to a laboratory for analysis to determine if they are cancerous, precancerous, or non-cancerous.

Contact Your Physician

You can contact your doctor for more information or counseling about colonoscopy and to schedule an appointment for the test if necessary. Remember that early colonoscopy can help you receive early treatment and improve your quality of life.



Social and Emotional

For recommendations, tools and resources on how you and your family can cope with emotional and physical concerns that arise during and after medical treatment, please visit your primary care physician or contact the following phone lines:

Medical Advice Line

1-844-347-7801

TTY/TDD 1-844-347-7804

APS Health

787-641-9133

References

[https://www.mayoclinic.org/es/tests-procedures/colonoscopy/about/pac-20393569#:~:text=Una%20colonoscopia%20es%20un%20examen,\(colonoscopia\)%20en%20el%20recto.](https://www.mayoclinic.org/es/tests-procedures/colonoscopy/about/pac-20393569#:~:text=Una%20colonoscopia%20es%20un%20examen,(colonoscopia)%20en%20el%20recto.)

<https://medlineplus.gov/spanish/ency/article/003886.htm>

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