

## Colonoscopy



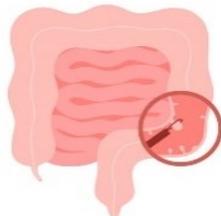
A colonoscopy is a medical procedure performed to look inside the colon and rectum for possible changes or abnormalities. The procedure is performed with a colonoscope, which has a small camera attached to a flexible tube so it can reach the entire length of the colon. If necessary, during the procedure,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

It is advisable to perform a colonoscopy from the age of 50 if there are no risk factors. If there are any risk factors, colonoscopy should be done before age 50 and more often than recommended for people without risk factors.

### Why is colonoscopy important?

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

- **Investigate bowel signs and symptoms:** This procedure helps the doctor to explore possible causes of abdominal pain, rectal bleeding, chronic constipation, chronic diarrhea, and other bowel problems. The doctor will also be able to find if there's any reason for anemia or if blood is found in the stool.
- **Screen for colon cancer:** Colonoscopy is an option of screening for colon cancer.
- If you have had polyps in the past, your doctor may recommend a follow-up colonoscopy to look for and remove additional polyps.



### How to prepare for a colonoscopy?

The bowels need to be empty and clean for the test. Your doctor will walk you through the steps for pre-procedure preparation. These may include:



- Use of enemas.
- Do not eat solid foods for 1 to 3 days before the colonoscopy. You will probably be able to have clear liquids such as: teas, fat-free broths or consommés, gelatin, strained fruit juices, and water.
- Use of laxatives.

Depending on the patient, the doctor may suggest additional steps.

### During the procedure

You will be given medicine through vein to help you to relax and not feel any pain. You may be conscious during the exam and may even be able to speak. You probably won't remember anything about the procedure.

### After the procedure

Due to the effects of the sedative, you will need someone to drive you to your home. You should not drive or make any important decision for the rest of the day. You may feel bloated or pass gas for a few hours after the procedure as you discharge air from your colon. If your doctor removed any polyps during your colonoscopy, he or she may recommend a special diet.

### Colonoscopy Results

**Negative result:** A colonoscopy is considered negative if the doctor does not find any abnormalities in the colon. Your doctor may recommend that you have another colonoscopy:

- In 10 years, if you have no risk factors for colon cancer.
- In 5 years, if you have a medical history of polyps.
- Within one year, if there was residual deposition in the colon that prevented a complete colon exam.

**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 can be precancerous. Polyps removed during colonoscopy are sent to a laboratory for testing to determine if they are cancerous, precancerous, or noncancerous.

### Contact your Primary Physician

You can contact your doctor for more information or advice about the colonoscopy and to make an appointment to have the procedure if it's necessary.



Remember that getting a colonoscopy done early, can help you get early treatment and improve your quality of life.

### Social and Emotional Aspect

For recommendations, tools, and resources on how you and your family can deal with the emotional and physical concerns that arise during and after your 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 Healthcare

787-641-9133

### References:

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

<https://www.mayoclinic.org/es-es/tests-procedures/colonoscopy/about/pac-20393569>

<https://www.cancer.org/es/tratamiento/como-comprender-su-diagnostico/pruebas/endoscopia/colonoscopia.html>

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