

Endoscopy Department

Colonoscopy

Important information

Before your appointment

- Please follow the enclosed bowel preparation instructions carefully. Your bowel must be completely empty to allow the endoscopist to have a clear view.
- Stop taking iron tablets seven days before the procedure. All other medication (including aspirin) should be taken as normal
- If you take **Warfarin** please read the **Alert for patients on Warfarin** on page 2 as you may need to have an INR test seven days before your procedure.
- If you have **diabetes** please read the advice on page 7 and 8.
- If you have any questions about the procedure or find that you cannot keep this appointment, please contact the Endoscopy Office between 9:00 and 17:00 Monday to Friday on 01223 257080.

On the day

- Drink as much fluid as you can, even on the day of the procedure.
- If you have an afternoon appointment please remember to take the rest of the bowel preparation first thing in the morning.
- Please ensure you are accompanied. We cannot sedate you if you come to the department alone.

At the hospital

- Please come to the Endoscopy Department on level 3 of the Addenbrooke's Treatment Centre (ATC).
- Use the 'Patient and Visitor Treatment Centre Car Park', opposite the main entrance of the ATC. Take your parking ticket and appointment letter to the ATC reception desk to obtain discounted parking.
- **Please note that the appointment time is for your pre procedure check, not the time of your examination.** The length of time you will be here will vary enormously but may be anything from two to four hours or more. Please ask your admitting nurse for further information during your admission check.

Alert for Endoscopy patients on Warfarin or Clopidogrel or other anticoagulant medication

You **must** read this guidance **before** your procedure.

If you have any questions or do not know whether to stop your medication before your Endoscopy please phone 01223 216515

Warfarin: for patients advised to continue medication

- You should have an **INR test seven days** before the Endoscopy.
- If that **INR result is 3.0 or less**, continue with your usual daily Warfarin dose.
- If that **INR result is more than 3.0**, ask your supervising anticoagulant service for advice to **reduce your daily Warfarin dose** so that your INR is 3.0 or less when you have the Endoscopy.

Warfarin: for patients advised to stop medication

- You should **stop Warfarin five days** before the Endoscopy.
- After the Endoscopy go back to your usual daily dose as soon as you are eating again (that will usually be the same evening).
- You should have your INR checked one week later to ensure you are adequately anticoagulated again.

If you have:

- metal mitral valve
- metal valve + previous stroke/thrombosis
- valvular heart disease

you may need Heparin injections instead of Warfarin. Ask your local anticoagulant service for advice.

Clopidogrel : for patients advised to continue medication

- Continue with your usual dose.

Clopidogrel : for patients advised to stop medication

- You should stop **Clopidogrel seven days** before the Endoscopy.

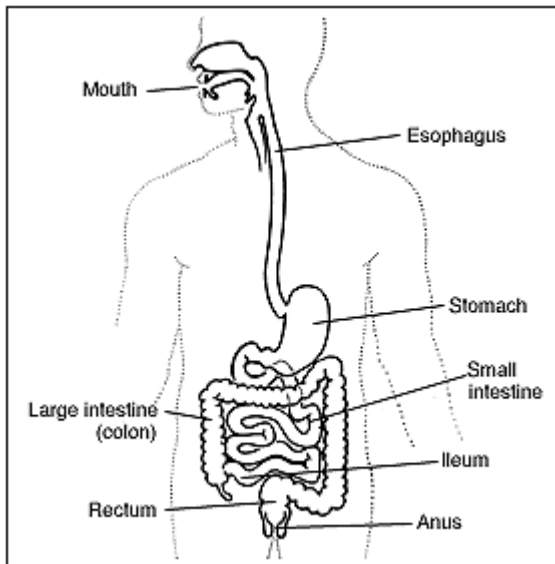
Other anticoagulant medication :

Acenocoumarol, sinthrome, phenindione, dindevan: If you are taking any of these please contact the Endoscopy department 01223 216515

What is a colonoscopy?

Your doctor has requested this procedure to help investigate and manage your medical condition.

Colonoscopy is an examination of the colon, also called the large bowel or intestine. The last part of the colon leads into the rectum where faeces (stools) are stored before passing out of the anus (back passage).



The procedure involves passing a narrow flexible instrument through the anus into the colon to examine the colon lining. This allows us to see if there are any problems such as inflammation or polyps (a polyp is a bit like a wart). The procedure usually takes thirty minutes but times vary considerably. If it takes longer, please do not worry.

Sometimes it is helpful for diagnosis to take a sample (biopsy) of the lining of the bowel. A small instrument, called forceps, passes through the colonoscope to 'pinch' out a tiny bit of the lining (about the size of a

pinhead). This sample is sent to the laboratory for analysis. It is also possible to remove polyps in a similar way. Most people find this completely painless.

Getting ready for the procedure

You should expect frequent bowel movements starting within three hours of the first dose of the bowel preparation. It is advisable to stay at home the day you take the bowel preparation and stay close to a toilet; make sure you have plenty of fluids in the house before taking the preparation.

On arrival at the department, we will explain the procedure to you and ask you to sign a consent form. You can change your mind about having the procedure at any time.

Before the procedure we will give you a sedative (by injection into a vein) to make you feel relaxed and sleepy. The sedative will not put you to sleep (this is **not** a general anaesthetic). In addition, we will also give you some pain relief.

The sedative will continue to have a mild effect for up to 24 hours and may leave you unsteady on your feet for a while.

You **must** arrange for a responsible adult to come with you and wait to take you home. You will not be able to drive yourself. **If you come without an escort, we will have to cancel the procedure.** If you are entitled to use hospital transport, an escort is not required.

Additional information for people with a colostomy

If you have a colostomy, you may find the bowel preparation easier to manage if you use a drainable colostomy bag. These can be obtained by contacting the stoma care nurses on 01223 216505. If you have had a colostomy you may be able to have the procedure without sedation and hence will not need an escort. However, if you wish to have a sedative, you must be accompanied.

What happens during the procedure

You will need to undress and put on a gown. We will ask you to remove any glasses and we will make you comfortable on a couch, lying on your left side with your knees bent. For your comfort and reassurance, a trained nurse will stay with you throughout the procedure.

After the sedative, we will give you oxygen through a facemask and put a plastic 'peg' on your finger to monitor your pulse and oxygen levels. The sedative will make you relaxed and drowsy; it will not put you to sleep.

The endoscopist will then gently insert the colonoscope through your anus into your colon. During the procedure, air is passed into your colon to give a clear view of its lining. You may experience some wind-like pains, but they should not last long.

At this time, you might feel as if you need to go to the toilet. This is a perfectly natural reaction but as the bowel will be empty, there is no need to worry. There may be periods of discomfort as the tube goes around bends in the bowel. If you find the procedure more uncomfortable than you would like, please let the nurse know and we will give you some more sedative or pain relief. In order to make the procedure easier you may be asked to change position (for example roll onto your back). However if you make it clear that you are too uncomfortable we will stop the procedure.

Potential risks

Taking the bowel preparation might prevent the absorption of the oral contraceptive pill. Additional contraceptive precautions should be taken until the next period begins.

Colonoscopy procedures carry a small risk (one in 1000 cases) of bleeding or perforation (tear) to the bowel. These are more likely to occur after the removal of a polyp. On very rare occasions, this may require an operation which may involve making a temporary opening (called a stoma) in the abdomen to allow the passage of waste (faeces).

Removing a polyp can sometimes cause bleeding although this is usually stopped during the procedure. Occasionally bleeding may occur when a patient has gone home and, even more rarely, some of these people may need a blood transfusion. Another rare complication is an adverse reaction to the intravenous sedative and pain relief medication.

Like all tests, this procedure will not always show up all abnormalities and, on very rare occasions, a significant abnormality may not be identified. If you have any questions about this please ask either at the time of the procedure or the person who referred you.

After the procedure

Following the colonoscopy, we will take you to a recovery area while the sedation wears off. We will always do our best to respect your privacy and dignity, such as the use of curtains. If you have any concerns, please speak to the department sister or charge nurse.

When you are sufficiently awake, we will give you a drink before you get dressed. You can then go home; this may be up to an hour following the procedure.

We advise you not to drive, operate machinery, return to work, drink alcohol or sign any legally binding documents for a 24 hour period after the procedure. We also advise you to have a responsible adult stay with you for the next 12 hours. You can eat and drink as normal.

You may feel bloated and have some wind-like pains if some of the air remains in your bowel; these usually settle down quickly.

If you experience any of the following please contact your GP, the Endoscopy Department 01223 216515 or the Emergency Department 01223 217118 for further advice:

- severe pain
- black tarry stools
- persistent bleeding

When will I know the result?

The endoscopist will give you information about the procedure at the bedside in the recovery area but if you would like more privacy, we will take you to a separate room. It is a good idea to have someone with you when you talk to the endoscopist because the sedation can affect your ability to remember the discussion.

Final results from biopsies or polyp removals will be given to you either by the healthcare professional who requested the procedure at a clinic appointment or by letter. These results can take several weeks to come through. You should discuss details of these results and any further treatment with that person.

Alternatives:

In some cases, depending on individual factors such as the symptoms present and the presenting condition, the alternative to a colonoscopy is:

- a Computerised Tomography (CT) colon scan.

For more information:

- Contact the Endoscopy Office between 9:00 and 17:00 on 01223 257080.
- See www.addenbrookes.org.uk/consent

Diabetic advice - morning appointment (before 13:00)

Please follow these instructions if your procedure is in the **morning**. For any diabetes related questions during bowel preparation, please contact your GP or the diabetes specialist nurses on 01223 245151 bleep 152078.

<p>Food & Drink</p> <p>You should not eat anything on the day you take your bowel preparation and should continue without food until after your procedure. However, you must drink as much as possible during this time. Drink at least a glass full of clear fluids every hour during your bowel preparation, so that you do not become dehydrated.</p> <p>Make sure you have some sugary drinks available e.g. Lucozade 100ml, apple or grape juice 200ml. Drink these if your blood sugar drops below 4. Ensure that your bedtime blood sugar is at least 10</p> <p>Test your blood sugar regularly throughout the day. Continue drinking on the day of your procedure.</p>
<p>Insulin – taken once daily</p> <p>No change to insulin dose necessary</p>
<p>Insulin - taken twice daily</p> <p>DAY BEFORE PROCEDURE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • take ½ your normal insulin both times you inject, with a sugary drink. <p>DAY OF PROCEDURE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • do not take your normal morning insulin. Bring it with you plus something to eat • after your procedure take ½ your normal morning insulin with something to eat • take your normal evening insulin dose.
<p>Insulin – taken four times a day</p> <p>DAY BEFORE PROCEDURE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • do not take any quick acting insulin. • take your normal bedtime insulin unless you take Insulatard or Humulin I. If so, reduce these by 1/2. <p>DAY OF PROCEDURE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • do not take your normal morning insulin. • after your procedure take your normal short acting lunchtime insulin with food • take your normal evening and bedtime insulin doses.
<p>Tablets for diabetes</p> <p>DAY BEFORE PROCEDURE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • do not take any diabetic tablets. <p>DAY OF PROCEDURE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • do not have your morning tablets. Restart tablets at the next dose after your procedure.

Diabetic advice - afternoon appointment

Please follow these instructions if your procedure is in the **afternoon**. For any diabetes related questions during bowel preparation, please contact your GP or the diabetes specialist nurse on 01223 245151 bleep 152078.

<p>Food & Drink</p> <p>Day before procedure</p> <p>FOOD: You may have breakfast & lunch. Do not have any further food until after the procedure.</p> <p>DRINK: Drink as much as possible. Drink at least a full glass of clear fluids every hour during bowel preparation to prevent dehydration. Make sure you have sugary drinks available, e.g. lucozade (100ml), apple or grape juice (200ml). Drink these if your blood sugar drops below 4. Ensure your bedtime blood sugar is at least 10. Test your blood sugar regularly throughout the day.</p> <p>On the day of the procedure</p> <p>FOOD: do not eat until after your procedure. DRINK: continue drinking.</p>
<p>Insulin and Tablets</p>
<p>Insulin – taken once daily</p> <p>Day before and on the day of procedure: no change to dose needed.</p>
<p>Insulin - taken twice daily</p> <p>Day before procedure:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • take normal morning insulin with breakfast. • take ½ normal evening insulin with a sugary drink. <p>Day of procedure:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • take ½ normal morning insulin with a sugary drink. • take normal evening insulin dose. Eat as normal.
<p>Insulin – taken four times a day</p> <p>Day before procedure:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • take your normal morning and lunchtime insulin doses with food. • do not take any quick acting insulin at supper time • take your normal bedtime insulin dose unless you take Insulatard or Humulin I. If so, reduce these by 1/2. Do not have a bedtime snack. <p>Day of procedure:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • do not take any morning or lunchtime quick acting insulin • you may take your long acting insulin in the morning as normal • after your procedure take your normal evening and bedtime insulin doses with food.
<p>Tablets for insulin</p> <p>Day before procedure: take your normal morning tablets. Do not take any evening tablets. On the day: do not have your morning tablets. Restart tablets at next dose after procedure.</p>



We are currently working towards a smoke-free site. Smoking is only permitted in the designated smoking areas.

For advice and support in quitting, contact your GP or the free NHS Stop Smoking helpline on 0800 169 0 169

Help with this leaflet:



If you would like this information in another language, large print or audio format, please ask the department to contact Patient Information: 01223 216032 or

patient.information@addenbrookes.nhs.uk



Document history

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