

## What is a Colonoscopy?

A colonoscopy is a procedure that allows your physician to examine the lining of your entire large intestine (colon) from the rectum to the lower end of the small intestine. A small flexible tube (colonoscopy) about the thickness of your index finger with a bright light at its tip is gently inserted into the anus and advanced into the colon. The video camera on the scope transmits images of the inside of the colon to a monitor allowing the physician to examine the colon lining for any disease or abnormalities such as inflamed tissue (colitis), polyps, ulcers, and bleeding.

## Preparation

To allow a clear view, the colon must be completely emptied of stool for the procedure. If it is not, certain areas may not be seen and the colonoscopy may have to be repeated. In general preparation for colonoscopy consists of taking only clear liquids the day before the procedure. A clear liquid diet means liquids with NO pulp that you can see through clearly: fat-free bouillon or broth, strained fruit juice, water, black coffee, black tea, clear soda, Gatorade, gelatin, or Popsicles. Do not take anything that has artificial red or orange color in it. You will also need to drink a special cleansing (laxative) preparation the night before or the day of your colonoscopy. **Follow your physician's instructions carefully. If you are unable to take the preparation, call your physician.**

## What To Expect Before, During, and After Your Colonoscopy

Prior to the procedure you will be called and asked questions regarding your medical history and the reason for having the colonoscopy. On

the day of your procedure the nurse getting you ready will review this information and answer any questions you might have about the test. She will then start an IV; your driver must be in our waiting area at this time.

In the procedure room our nurse anesthetist will go over the anesthesia with you. You will then be asked to lie on your left side and anesthesia will be given. After you have been sedated your physician will examine your anus with his finger (digital exam) to check for any abnormalities. Then, the physician will gently insert the lubricated colonoscope through your anus into your rectum and slowly advance it to the end of your colon. The procedure usually lasts 10 to 30 minutes. If your physician sees an area that needs further evaluation he may take a biopsy, (a small sample of tissue that can be examined under a microscope) this is painless. Polyps are generally removed by cutting and cauterizing (burning) and then sent for examination. Results usually take 7-14 days. Biopsies do not imply cancer and the majority of polyps are non-cancerous. The removal of polyps is one of the best means of preventing colorectal cancer. If there is bleeding in the colon, it can be treated with cautery, or medication.

After your procedure, you will return to the recovery area. During this time, your physician will explain the results of your colonoscopy. You and your driver will be given discharge instructions, which include diet, medication and activity restrictions. You will not be able to drive, operate machinery, drink alcoholic beverages, make any critical decisions such as signing legal documents, or do anything that requires you to be alert and coordinated until the following day. Total time in the center for your procedure is usually around two hours.

A responsible adult must be available to drive you home as the sedation impairs your reflexes and judgment.

## Colonoscopy Checklist:

- ✓ Arrange for a responsible adult to stay at the center during your procedure and drive you home after your discharge. Your procedure will be cancelled or rescheduled if the above is not followed.
- ✓ Follow diet instructions
- ✓ Do not drink after the time specified in your instructions.
- ✓ Take laxative preparation as ordered
- ✓ You may want to purchase Cottonelle flushable wipes to help you with preparation.
- ✓ Follow medication instructions that were given
- ✓ Wear loose, comfortable clothing. You will be asked to remove all clothing, except your socks, prior to your colonoscopy.
- ✓ Do not bring jewelry and other valuables.
- ✓ Contact us if you experience any change in your health before the procedure. If you have a minor elevation in your temperature, a cold or cough, please let us know. (717) 217-4312

## Arrival

The Chambersburg Endoscopy Center is located inside your physician's office at 835 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue Chambersburg.

