

Understanding Colonoscopy

What is Colonoscopy?

Colonoscopy enables the endoscopist to examine the lining of your colon (large intestine) for abnormalities by inserting a flexible tube as thick as your finger into your anus and slowly advancing it into the rectum and colon. This instrument, called a colonoscope, has its own lens and light source and it allows your endoscopist to view images on a video monitor.

When is Colonoscopy done?

- Change in Bowel Habits
- Colorectal Cancer Screening/Prevention
- Blood in stools
- Weight Loss/Abdominal Pain

How to prepare for Colonoscopy

Your colon (large intestine) must be empty before colonoscopy. Generally, no eating or drinking is allowed 4 to 8 hours before the procedure. Your endoscopist will tell you what dietary restrictions to follow and what cleansing routine to use. In general, the preparation consists of limiting your diet to clear liquids the day before and consuming either a large volume of special cleansing solution or special oral laxatives. The colon must be completely clean for the procedure to be accurate and comprehensive, so be sure to follow your endoscopist's instructions carefully.

Most medications can be continued as usual, but some medications can interfere with the preparation or the examination. Inform your endoscopist about the medications you're taking, particularly aspirin products, arthritis medications, anticoagulants (blood thinners), insulin or iron products. Also, be sure to mention your medication allergies if any. Alert your endoscopist if you require antibiotics prior to dental procedures, because you might need antibiotics before a colonoscopy as well.



What can be expected during Colonoscopy?

Colonoscopy is well-tolerated and rarely causes much pain. You might feel pressure, bloating or cramping during the procedure. Your endoscopist might give you a sedative to help you relax and better tolerate any discomfort. You will lie on your side or back while your endoscopist slowly advances a colonoscope through your large intestine to examine the lining. Your endoscopist will examine the lining again as he or she slowly withdraws the colonoscope. The procedure itself usually takes 15 to 60 minutes, although you should plan on two to three hours for waiting, preparation and recovery. In some cases, the endoscopist cannot pass the colonoscope through the entire colon to where it meets the small intestine. Although another examination might be needed, your endoscopist might decide that the limited examination is sufficient.

What happens after Colonoscopy?

Your endoscopist will explain the results of the examination to you, although you'll probably have to wait for the results of any biopsies performed. If you have been given sedatives during the procedure, someone must drive you home and stay with you. Even if you feel alert after the procedure, your judgment and reflexes could be impaired for the rest of the day. You might have some cramping or bloating because of the air introduced into the colon during the examination. This should disappear quickly when you pass gas. You should be able to eat after the examination, but your endoscopist might restrict your diet and activities, especially after polypectomy.

What are the potential complications?

Colonoscopy and polypectomy are generally safe when performed by doctors who have been specially trained and are experienced in these procedures. One possible complication is a perforation, or tear, through the bowel wall that could require surgery. Bleeding might occur at the site of biopsy or polypectomy, but it's usually minor. Bleeding can stop on its own or be controlled through the colonoscope; it rarely requires follow-up treatment. Some patients might have a reaction to the sedatives or complications from heart or lung disease. Although complications after colonoscopy are uncommon, it's important to recognize early signs of possible complications. Contact your endoscopist if you notice severe abdominal pain, fever and chills, or rectal bleeding of more than one-half cup. Note that bleeding can occur several days after the procedure.



12 Farrer Park Station Road, #05-01, Singapore 217565



+65 9655 2101



info@starmedspecialist.com



+65 6322 6333

Opening Hours

Monday-Friday: 8.30am-6pm

Saturday: 8.30am-1pm

Sunday & Public Holidays: Closed