



Patient Information

Colonoscopy

Please speak to a member of staff if you need this leaflet in
large print, audio, or another language

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Introduction

Your Specialist has recommended that you have a colonoscopy to investigate your symptoms.

You will be asked to attend either Royal Stoke Hospital Endoscopy Unit or County Hospital Endoscopy Unit.

Your appointment

- Please check your appointment letter before attending to make sure you attend the correct site.
- **If you request sedation, your procedure will be cancelled if you do not have an escort arranged to take you home. The escort will also need to stay with you for 12 hours once you return home.**
- As you will need to see the admission Nurse first, the time you are given to attend is not the time of your colonoscopy.
- The time is approximate due to different procedures taking different time periods.
- Emergency procedures will take priority.

Expect to be in the unit for approximately 3 hours.

**Endoscopy appointments are in high demand so
if you are unable to attend your appointment, please contact the
Endoscopy Unit as soon as possible**

Tel: 01782 676010

This will allow your appointment to be offered to another patient.

If you call to cancel your appointment, you will need to provide:

- Your full name.
- Date of birth.
- Date of your procedure.
- Contact telephone number.

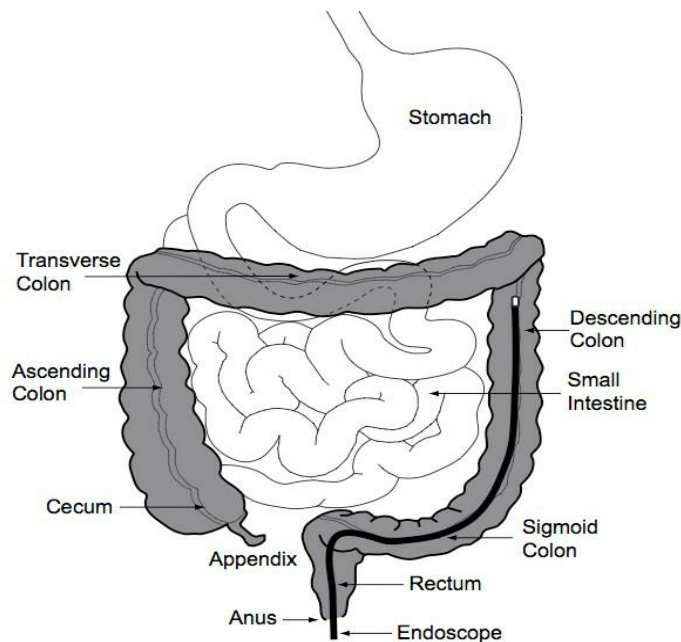
You are advised to discuss with your doctor the implications of not having this procedure.

What is a colonoscopy?

A colonoscopy is a test which allows the Doctor/Nurse Specialist (Endoscopist) to look directly at the lining of your large bowel (colon).

A long flexible telescope (colonoscope), about the thickness of your index finger, with a bright light at its tip is carefully passed through the bottom (anus) to the caecum and the end of your small intestine.

Diagram to show the procedure



- A digital video camera on the colonoscope transmits pictures of the inside of your colon to a monitor. This enables the Endoscopist to be able to look for any abnormalities.
- A biopsy (small piece of tissue) may be taken using tiny biopsy forceps. This does not cause any pain.
- If polyps (projections of tissue, rather like mushrooms) are found, in most cases these can be removed, or a biopsy taken to be sent for further tests.
- Sometimes polyps are not removed, and you may need a further test this will be discussed with you before you go home.

What are the benefits and risks?

The procedure helps to investigate symptoms and be able to treat them. A colonoscopy does have its risks but major and serious complications are rare. These risks will be discussed with you before you sign the consent form.

- **Bleeding** can happen specifically after taking a biopsy or after removing a polyp however, this should stop quickly within a few days.
- **A significant bleed** is an infrequent occurrence however, this risk increases to 1 in 200 for large polyp removal. If a significant bleed were to happen, further treatment may be required such as a blood transfusion. It is advisable not to travel overseas for 2 weeks following removal of polyps because bleeding can be delayed in some cases.
- **Very rarely a perforation (tear in the bowel).** The risk of a perforation is less than 1 in 1000. If a significant perforation were to happen, further treatment may be required such as surgery or a stay in hospital.
- **Reaction to medication** for example, sedation and painkillers.
- **Missed pathology.** This is where a diagnosis is not seen.

Every effort is made to reduce these risks. If you have any concerns, please speak to an Endoscopist or a member of the Endoscopy team.

What preparation will I need for my colonoscopy?

You will be given some special medicine to drink that makes your bowels empty. Your bowel must be completely empty of waste material (faeces) for the Endoscopist to have a clear view.

The colonoscopy may have to be repeated at a later date if your bowel is not empty.

Preparation instructions

Five Days before your colonoscopy	You must follow the dietary and medication instructions provided in the information leaflet: 'Taking Moviprep/Picolax/Plenvu Oral Bowel Cleansing Agents Safely and Effectively for Colonoscopy/Flexible Sigmoidoscopy. '
Day of colonoscopy	Please stop drinking clear fluids TWO HOURS before your appointment at the hospital.
What should I bring on the day?	• If you are diabetic, please bring your insulin or tablets and a light snack. • Your prescription medication. • Your reading glasses so that you can read the consent form. • You are welcome to bring your own dressing gown and slippers. • Contact details of your escort/relative collecting you.
When you arrive If need someone to support you through-out your stay with any care needs, please call the unit to arrange.	Please report to the Endoscopy Reception. You will be greeted by a Nurse and then: • You will be asked several questions about your health and current medication. • Your blood pressure and pulse will be taken. • You may be asked to sign a consent form. • You will be taken to a private single sex area. • You will be asked to undress and change in to a theatre gown or if you have brought them, your own dressing gown and slippers. • A cannula (small needle) will be inserted so that intravenous medication can be given. • Please talk to us about any worries or concerns that you may have.

What about my medication?

- If you are taking any blood thinning medication for example, Warfarin, Clopidogrel, Apixaban, Rivaroxaban the Endoscopy Pre-Assessment Nurse will give you instructions regarding your medications.
- There is no need to stop low dose aspirin, for example, 75mg/day.
- If you are diabetic, please contact your Diabetic Nurse Specialist for advice.
- If you take Iron tablets, please stop them 5 days before the test.
- If you have a stoma, please contact your Specialist Nurse for advice.
- If you have any other concerns about your medication, please seek advice from your GP.
- If you need any further support related to your medication or how to take your bowel medication, please contact the Pre-Assessment team on **Stoke**: 01782 675732 / 675734 **County**: 01785 886342 / 239993

Your colonoscopy procedure

The procedure takes place in the Endoscopy theatre.

- You will be kept as comfortable as possible.
- You will need to lie on your left side.
- A Nurse will stay with you throughout the procedure.
- Each stage of the procedure will be explained to you as it happens.
- Your oxygen levels and pulse will be monitored as well as your level of comfort.
- You may be given oxygen during the test, through little prongs that fit just inside your nostrils.

Sedation and painkiller options

- **‘Gas and air’ (Entonox)**, is a mild sedative and painkiller. This method will help you to feel more comfortable and relaxed and wears off in half an hour.
- **Moderate sedative (Midazolam) and strong painkiller (Fentanyl)**. This method will help you to relax but it is not a general anesthetic.

This is given through a small needle placed in a vein on the back of your hand. This can affect your breathing so you will be monitored during the procedure and given oxygen.

- **Deep Sedation (Propofol)** is only available in exceptional circumstances and requires an anesthetist to be present. This will have been discussed with you by the Consultant or nurse before your procedure.

During your procedure

- The Endoscopist will carefully perform a rectal examination first with a gloved finger and then pass the colonoscope through your bottom (anus) into your rectum and on into your colon.
- Some abdominal cramping and pressure is felt from the air which is introduced into your colon which is normal and will pass quickly.
- You may get the sensation of wanting to go to the toilet, but as the bowel is empty, there is no danger of this happening.
- You may feel you need to pass wind and, although this may be embarrassing, remember the staff do understand what is causing it.
- If you need to change position during the procedure, a Nurse will help you.
- The Nurse may need to press on your abdomen for a few moments during the procedure to help the colonoscope around awkward bends in your bowel. You will be warned before any pressure is applied.
- The Endoscopist may take tissue samples (biopsies), photographs or a video of your bowel, even if it all looks normal (if you do not wish for videos and pictures taken for learning purposes, please let the Endoscopist know).
- At the end of the examination, the colonoscope is removed quickly and easily.
- The procedure usually takes between 10 and 45 minutes.

After your procedure

- You may feel bloated because air remains in your bowel. This will settle as you pass wind.
- Your blood pressure and pulse will be monitored.
- If you have been given intravenous sedation you will need to rest in the recovery area until you are fully awake (usually one hour).
- If you have used gas and air (Entonox), you should be able to leave after 30 minutes as the sedative effects wear off quickly.

Going home

If you have received intravenous sedation, this impairs your reflexes and judgment and therefore a responsible adult needs to escort you home and stay with you for 12 hours.

Your procedure will be cancelled if you do not have an escort to collect you and take you home.

For 24 hours after the procedure, you must not:

- Drive.
- Operate machinery.
- Drink alcohol.
- Sign legal documents.

If you have received Entonox (gas and air):

- It wears off within 30 minutes and you should be able to drive home.
- You do not require an escort home.

You will be given any written information you need when you leave hospital.

Your medication after the procedure

We will talk to you about your medication after the procedure and before you go home in case changes to your medication are needed.

When will I know the results?

You will be told about the results when you are ready to be discharged and provided with a copy of the colonoscopy report. A copy will also be sent to your GP or whoever referred you.

It is suggested that when you receive your results, you have your escort or relative with you in case you forget any information due to the sedation you have received.

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ's)

Q: How long does the colonoscopy take?

A: A colonoscopy usually takes between 10 and 45 minutes, but you should be prepared to be in the Endoscopy department for at least 3 hours.

Q: Can I ask for the colonoscopy to be stopped?

A: Yes, you can withdraw your consent at any time before or during your procedure.

Q: Can I have my procedure done during my menstrual cycle?

A: It is perfectly fine to undergo your colonoscopy while on your period; your dignity will be respected at all times.

Q: Can I travel abroad after I have had my colonoscopy?

A: We advise that you do not travel abroad for at least two weeks following your colonoscopy.

Q: Why can't I have the procedure done at my local Hospital?

A: Some medical procedures may need specialised equipment that is not always available at your local hospital. We strive to provide the best care possible, which may sometimes involve referrals to facilities with the required resources.

Concerns or questions

For further advice about your appointment, please contact the Endoscopy Booking Office between 8 am and 5 pm Monday to Friday.

Endoscopy Booking Tel: 01782 676010.

For any advice about the colonoscopy or your medication, please contact the Endoscopy Pre-assessment Team between 9am and 5pm Monday to Friday.

Endoscopy Pre-assessment Team

Stoke: 01782 67532 / 675734

County: 01785 886342 / 239993

Please leave your contact number, full name, date of birth and date of your procedure as this is a voicemail facility. We will return your call as soon as possible.

Sources of information and support

For further information (including videos of what to expect during your appointment), please visit our website:

www.uhnm.nhs.uk/our-services/endoscopy/

Free Bus Service

There is a free shuttle bus service between Royal Stoke and County sites. Members of the public who wish to use this service are required to pre-book their journey in advance:

Shuttle Bus booking line Tel: 01782 824232

How to find us:

County Hospital (formerly Stafford Hospital), Weston Road, Stafford, ST16 3SA. Tel: 01785 257731	Royal Stoke Hospital, Newcastle Road, Stoke-on-Trent, ST4 6QG. Tel: 01782 715444
Endoscopy Unit is on the ground floor.	Endoscopy Unit is on lower ground floor 1.

Please note car parking charges may apply.