

Colonoscopy

Will I be sedated?

For a colonoscopy most patients choose to have sedation. If you choose to have conscious sedation you will have a small tube called a cannula put into your vein. You will be awake enough to talk with staff during the test and tell them if you are having any discomfort. Some patients will remember things about the test. Every effort will be made to keep you comfortable throughout the test procedure.

Answers to Frequently Asked Questions about this Procedure

- A nurse will stay with you throughout the examination.
- If necessary, the team will put an intravenous line in your arm. Your pulse and oxygen levels will be monitored.
- An examination of your rectum will be carried out.
- The tube will be passed through the rectum into the colon.
- The test will take between 15-60 minutes.
- During the test air will be put into your colon - enabling a better view.
- You may feel some stomach cramps and some pressure from the tube. This is normal and will pass quickly.

Imaging/Biopsies

- Photographs/videos of the intestine and samples of the intestine (biopsies) may be taken as part of your care, in order to diagnose or exclude particular diseases.
- The images or samples taken may be retained by the hospital for further testing and/or education and research in accordance with hospital procedures. In any such event, patient confidentiality will be maintained at all times.

If you request to reschedule or cancel your appointment, please contact the number on your appointment letter.

Complaints / Compliments /Comments

Please contact nursing staff if you wish to make a complaint, compliment or comment. A comments box is also situated in the endoscopy unit.

Hospital Facilities

- Coffee Dock
- Prayer Room

For your day procedure you will be attending a mixed day ward. If you have any concerns, please contact the relevant department. If you have any complications after your procedure please contact your GP/DOC or your nearest emergency department.

Other important points to note:

As the RCSI Louth Hospitals are teaching hospitals, a person other than a consultant, such as a registrar (senior trainee) or advanced nurse practitioner (ANP), may perform the procedure.



RCSI HOSPITALS
OSPIDÉIL RCSI



Louth County Hospital, Our Lady of Lourdes Hospital

Patient information on:

Colonoscopy

Please read this leaflet carefully and contact us before your procedure date if you have questions or concerns

Contact details:

Louth County Hospital (LCH):

Endoscopy Department

(042) 93 34 701

Monday to Friday, 8.00am - 6.00pm

Our Lady of Lourdes Hospital (LOL):

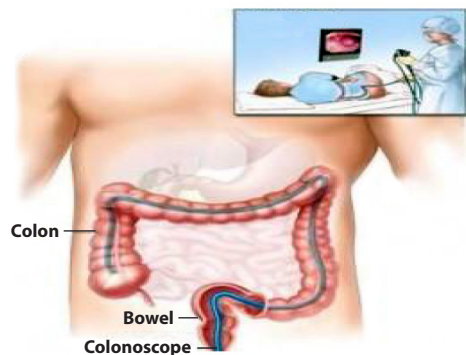
(041) 983 7601

Consent

Please read the information contained in this leaflet. You will be asked to sign a consent form on the day of your procedure. The doctor or nurse performing the test will answer any questions you may have and you may change your mind at any time.

What is a colonoscopy?

A full colonoscopy is a visual examination of the lining of your bowel. It is performed by using a thin tube (colonoscope) with a camera and a light on the tip which is used to look through the rectum into the large bowel (colon). During the course of the examination biopsies may be taken.



Preparation for the examination:

- To obtain a clear view, your colon must be empty. To enable this, you will need to fast before the test 6 hours from food - 4 hours from clear fluids.
- You will be provided with a hospital gown.
- Please have a telephone number of a relative or friend who may be contacted to collect you.
- The scheduling of your tests is an estimate only

and unfortunately there can be unforeseen delays, therefore plan to be in the department as a day case.

- If you have a referral from your doctor, present this to the secretary on arrival.
- Bring a list of current medication.
- You are advised not to bring jewellery, valuables or large sums of money.
- If you have sedation for this procedure you must be collected on discharge.

Medications (tablets)

- You may continue to take essential medication but if you are taking **blood thinning** medication you should contact the nurse in the Endoscopy Unit where you are having your procedure.
- There is no need to stop taking blood pressure medication.
- **Iron** tablets must be stopped one week before examination.
- If you have diabetes you should contact the Endoscopy Unit for advice before you attend for your test.

Risks?

Colonoscopy is a safe test but there are risks.

- **Bleeding:** If a polyp is removed during your procedure this can result in some bleeding. This bleeding can often be stopped straight away but may occasionally be more serious or may even occur a few days later. This may need further investigation or medical advice. Depending on the size, the risk of bleeding is 2 in every 1000 patients post polypectomy. Many polyps are the type which can turn into cancer if left untreated for a long period of time and removing them

when still benign eliminates the risk.

- **Perforation:** The colonoscope can cause a hole in the wall of your bowel. The chances of this happening are about one in 1,000. If this happens, you may need an operation.
- **Drug reaction:** You may have a reaction to the sedative that may make you have temporary breathing or heart problems. Serious problems are rare as you are carefully monitored during the investigation.
- **Missed Pathology:** Colonoscopy is not a perfect test and even with complete examination things, such as polyps or cancer, very occasionally can be missed (about 5 in every 100). Ensuring that your bowel is very clean helps to reduce the risk.
- The endoscopist will complete this test in >90% of cases. **Failure to complete** can be due to many factors. A poor bowel preparation can prevent the advancement of the scope in the bowel and a poor view is not acceptable nor is it safe to continue. If your test is incomplete another test maybe required and this will be discussed with you after the colonoscopy.
- If a complication occurs during your procedure in Louth County Hospital you may need to be transferred by ambulance to Our Lady of Lourdes Hospital for overnight observation or further treatment

What are the benefits?

- Colonoscopy is the best test to check the bowel. If polyps are identified, these will be taken away by the doctor if it is judged safe. Removing polyps increases slightly the risk of the procedure, but reduces the risk of bowel cancer in the years ahead.