

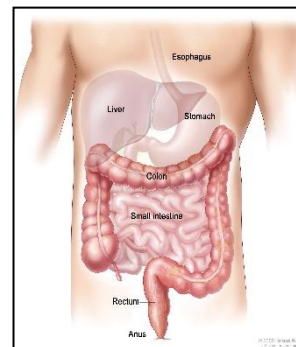
# Colonoscopy Procedure

## Outpatient Information – Gastroenterology Day Service

Your doctor has determined that further examination of your gastrointestinal tract is necessary to help them evaluate or treat your condition.

This information sheet has been prepared to help you understand the procedure. Please read it carefully.

If you have additional questions, please phone: 0800 555 400 to discuss these with an endoscopy nurse before the procedure.



### What is a Colonoscopy?

A colonoscopy is a procedure that allows the doctor to look directly at the lining of the large intestine or colon, to look for any abnormalities using an endoscope (a thin flexible tube about the thickness of your index finger). You can watch a CDHB colonoscopy video on:

[www.healthinfo/medical\\_test\\_and\\_procedures/colonoscopy](http://www.healthinfo/medical_test_and_procedures/colonoscopy)

### What preparation is required?

For this procedure to be successful and allow a clear view of your colon, your bowel must be as empty as possible. If the bowel is not empty, the whole procedure may have to be cancelled and need to be repeated on another occasion.

A pamphlet on how to prepare your bowel has been included with this information sheet and your appointment letter. Please follow the bowel preparation instructions carefully. If you have any questions or require this information in another language, please phone us to discuss further.

### What about my current medications?

Please contact us as soon as possible on **Ph. 0800 555 400** if you are taking or have recently started taking:

- Blood thinning medication such as Warfarin, Dabigatran, Rivaroxaban OR Clopidogrel, Prasugrel, Dipyridamole or Ticagrelor,
- Have a pacemaker OR implanted cardiac defibrillator.

If you are taking **iron supplements**, please stop these **7 days** before the procedure.

If you are taking **aspirin**, please **continue this as normal**.

Please **stop** taking the following medication, whilst you are taking the bowel preparation:

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You can re-start this medication the day after the colonoscopy procedure, as normal.

All other regular medications not outlined above, such as heart medications, psychiatric medications, steroids and epilepsy medications, can be taken as usual with a small mouthful of water.

Please take your regular medication **1½ hours prior** to beginning the Glycoprep-C, or **1½ hours after** completing the Glycoprep-C. This allows time for the medications to be absorbed.

Please note if you are taking an oral contraceptive, additional contraceptive precautions will be required whilst you are taking the bowel preparation and for 7 days after the procedure.

Please bring **all** your medications to the appointment, especially any nitrolingual sprays (GTN), asthma inhalers or diabetic medications.

If you need advice on how to manage your diabetes before the procedure, please read the pamphlet enclosed ***“Colonoscopy and Sigmoidoscopy if you have diabetes”***.

This information is also available on [www.healthinfo.co.nz](http://www.healthinfo.co.nz).

Alternatively, you can contact your GP for advice on how to manage your diabetes before the colonoscopy.

## **Where can I park?**

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Parking at Christchurch Hospital is limited. Please refer to the enclosed parking information sheet for advice and allow at least 30 mins to get to your appointment.

Information about parking is also available at:

<http://www.cdhb.health.nz/patients-visitors/pages/parking.aspx>

## **On arrival:**

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**Please report to:**      **Gastrointestinal Endoscopy Unit**  
                                 **2nd floor**  
                                 **Riverside building**  
                                 **Christchurch Hospital**

On arrival, the receptionist will check your personal details and a member of the nursing team will check your pre-assessment information with you before the procedure.

The nurse will also outline the risks and complications of a colonoscopy, before asking for you to consent to proceed.

## Consent:

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Before the procedure can begin you will need to sign a consent form. This consent form has been sent to you in the mail, so you can read it and think of any questions you would like to ask.

A nurse will discuss the procedure with you and explain the possible complications and side effects before asking you to sign the consent form. A doctor will also ask you if you consent to having the colonoscopy procedure before the procedure starts.

If you later change your mind, you are entitled to withdraw your consent at **any** stage of the procedure, even after signing the consent form.

## Possible complications

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Most colonoscopies are safe and uncomplicated when undertaken by experienced endoscopists, but as with any procedure there is a small risk of side effects or complications.

Possible complications/risks of a **COLONOSCOPY** are:

- Sedation / medication risks
- Perforation rate less than 1 in 1000
- Perforation rate post polypectomy less than 1 in 500
- Significant bleeding less than 1 in 100, where polypectomy is performed
- Missed significant pathology < 5%
- Incomplete examination may require further imaging

## What will happen during the procedure?

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A mild sedative and pain relief will be given through a small needle placed in the back of your hand or arm to help you relax. This will be given at regular intervals throughout the procedure to keep you comfortable. This medication has a mild amnesia-like effect, so you may not remember all of the procedure.

Oxygen will be given through little tubes that sit in your nose. You will have a small peg-like device clipped on to your finger or ear which will measure your heart rate and oxygen levels.

Then, whilst you are lying comfortably on your left side, the endoscopist will gently insert the colonoscope into your back passage and move it around the bowel.

Air will be used to inflate the bowel so the endoscopist can clearly see all the surfaces. This may be uncomfortable and cause a little bloating and / or cramping.

You may also feel pressure, like you need to go to the toilet. Do not worry about this, as your bowel will be completely empty and any fluid left in the bowel can be suctioned out by the endoscope.

A biopsy (small tissue sample) may be taken during the procedure to be sent to the laboratory for more tests. You will not feel this being done.

Polyps (small growths of tissue) may also be removed during the procedure and you will not feel this being done. This is called a polypectomy. All polyps that are found are removed at the same time, as some polyps may become cancerous over time.

After careful examination of the lining of your bowel, most of the air will be suctioned out before the procedure is completed to keep you as comfortable as possible.

## After the procedure

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You will be taken to the recovery area and your blood pressure, heart rate, breathing rate and oxygen levels will be monitored until you are awake. You will then be given something to eat and drink before going home.

A nurse will explain the findings of the colonoscopy procedure to you and give you a copy of the colonoscopy report to take home. This will also contain important information about re-starting blood thinning medications (*if relevant*).

A copy of your colonoscopy report will also be sent to your referring doctor, immediately on completion of the procedure.

## How long will it take?

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Please allow at least **3 hours** for your appointment. We would advise you to bring a book, magazine or iPad with you to help pass the time, as delays may sometimes occur due to emergency endoscopy procedures.

The colonoscopy procedure itself takes between 30-45 minutes and if you have not had sedation you will be able to go home immediately after completion of the procedure. If you had a sedative injection you will need at least one hour to recover in the unit before you can go home.

## When you leave the Gastrointestinal Endoscopy Unit

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Please make arrangements for someone to collect you *from the unit*, and care for you for **24 hours** after the procedure. This is for your own safety and protection. The sedation makes you forgetful and can impair your judgement and reflexes.

Even if you feel alert after the procedure you must not do any of the following for 24 hours:

- Drive a car
- Operate machinery
- Drink alcohol
- Sign any legal documents or
- Ride on public transport alone

## Confirm your appointment

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Please telephone to confirm your appointment as soon as possible:  
**Phone: 0800 555 400**

## Important

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You will need someone to **collect you** from the Gastrointestinal Endoscopy Unit and care for you for **24 hours** after the procedure. This is because of the sedative medications that you are given during the procedure.

If you do not have a friend, relative or support person who can do this, please talk to our booking team about your after-care options, when you telephone to confirm your appointment.

## Interpreter Service

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If you require the interpreter service, please ask an English-speaking person to call us as soon as possible so we can arrange this for you. This service is free. Please do not ask family and friends to act as an interpreter for you at this appointment.

## For more information about:

- hospital and specialist services, go to [www.cdhb.health.nz](http://www.cdhb.health.nz)
- your health and medication, go to [www.healthinfo.org.nz](http://www.healthinfo.org.nz)