

What is a colonoscopy?

A colonoscopy is a test, which allows the doctor to look directly at your child's colon, sometimes called the large intestine. This is the part of your child's bowel where food goes after it leaves the small intestine. The procedure happens whilst your child is asleep and does not hurt them.

Why do I need this procedure?

A colonoscopy is undertaken for one of the following reasons:

- To understand the nature of your child's diarrhoea or abdominal pain
- To see if your child has any inflammation in their large intestine
- To be able to take a biopsy to help to try and make a diagnosis to explain your child's symptoms.

What are the alternatives to colonoscopy?

Whilst there are other tests which can be performed to look at your child's large bowel, including X-rays and other scans, none can give the same information as a colonoscopy.

What happens before the procedure?

The day before the procedure, your child will need to take some medicines to help clear out their bowel to make the colonoscopy possible. These medicines will by their nature, cause your child to have loose and frequent stools, and occasionally some stomach cramps. Depending on your child's age and condition, these medicines will either be taken home, or your child will be admitted to hospital the day before the colonoscopy.

What happens during the colonoscopy?

Your child will have a general anaesthetic for this procedure. Whilst your child is asleep, a thin flexible tube with a bright light is put into your child's bottom, and from here it goes into their large intestine. The doctor can then look down the tube and see the lining of the large intestine. Biopsies (very small pieces of tissue) are taken which will be analysed in the laboratory. The taking of these biopsies is painless.

How long does it take to have a colonoscopy?

This depends on your child's age, but around 25 to 30minutes.

What happens after the colonoscopy?

After your child's general anaesthetic, he/she will be returned to the recovery ward for at least one hour to allow him/her time to recover, as he/she will feel drowsy.

Your child will be able to leave the hospital on the same day, once they have had something to eat and drink without any undue nausea or discomfort.

Returning to normal activity

If your child feels up to it, then there is no reason why they should not be able to return to school the following day and participate as normal in all activities. However, if they feel dizzy or tired, they may need the day off school.

What are the possible risks of colonoscopy?

Common side effects, which will ease over the first few days may include:

- Bleeding: the passage of small (less than a teaspoon) amount of blood in your child's stools may be seen in the first day or two afterwards.
- Pain: mild discomfort, like a 'stitch' may be felt the following day.

Occasionally you may also experience some other less common, but more worrying risks:

- ✓ Severe bleeding or bowel perforation: these events are very rare after colonoscopy. The symptoms are:
 - Passage of blood in the stools greater than described above
 - Severe and prolonged abdominal pain, not responding to panadol/paracetamol

ANY QUESTIONS?

Please do not hesitate to come and see us, or telephone if you have any questions. Your doctor or PAC nurse is always happy to talk to you a few days before the procedure if you are at all concerned. We look forward to seeing you on the day.

HOSPITAL INFORMATION

The Digestive Health Centre was the first day procedure centre in Australia established in 1977. The facility is a purpose built registered private day hospital.

We offer a courteous, high quality, affordable digestive health care for the whole family.

To maximise patient comfort and safety, the hospital has:

- ◆ ISO certification ensures that high quality is maintained and independently audited.
- ◆ The Digestive Health Centre has a comprehensive infection prevent and control program in place. Our facility and staff are regularly audited for compliance with national infection and control guidelines, Australian Standards for reprocessing of reusable instruments and the Australian Commission of Safety and Quality in Healthcare [ACSQHC] *National Safety and Quality Health Service Standards*.
- ◆ Automated equipment ensures premium cleaning and disinfection of endoscopes and instruments.
- ◆ The latest video endoscopic equipment offering accurate clinical findings.
- ◆ Endoscopy reports include photographs of findings.
- ◆ Comfortable recovery room with beds and recliners.
- ◆ Consulting rooms to discuss findings privately.
- ◆ Comfortable waiting area for relatives and friends.
- ◆ Free car parking.
- ◆ Agreements with all major health funds and Veterans' Affairs.

PATIENT'S RIGHTS & RESPONSIBILITIES

All patients have the right to:

- ◆ Consideration of all beliefs, ethnic, cultural, dietary and religious practices.
- ◆ Privacy and confidentiality.
- ◆ Personal safety.
- ◆ Knowledge of the names of all persons providing the service.
- ◆ Detailed information about the procedure, reasons for the procedure, significant risks, alternatives, costs and an opportunity to ask questions .
- ◆ Formal and informed consent.
- ◆ Request a second opinion.
- ◆ Refuse treatment or discharge themselves despite the advice of the attending doctor or staff.
- ◆ Make a complaint about any aspect of care . Complaint forms are available in the reception area or you may ask to speak to the Complaints Officer. No person making a complaint will be adversely affected.
- ◆ Access of medical records in accordance with privacy legislation.
- ◆ To refuse the presence of healthcare workers not directly involved in their care.

You have the responsibility for:

- Providing, to the best of your knowledge, accurate and complete information about present complaints, past illnesses, hospitalisations, medications, and other matters relating to your health.
- Reporting unexpected changes in your condition to the doctor.
- Reporting your understanding of proposed treatment and action expected of you.
- Arriving fasted and prepared for the procedure.
- Arranging to be taken home by a responsible adult afterwards.
- Following the treatment plan recommended by the practitioner primarily responsible for your care. This may include following the instructions of nurses.
- Keeping appointments and, if unable to do so for any reason, notify the doctor or the hospital.
- Your actions if you refuse treatment or do not follow the doctor's instructions.