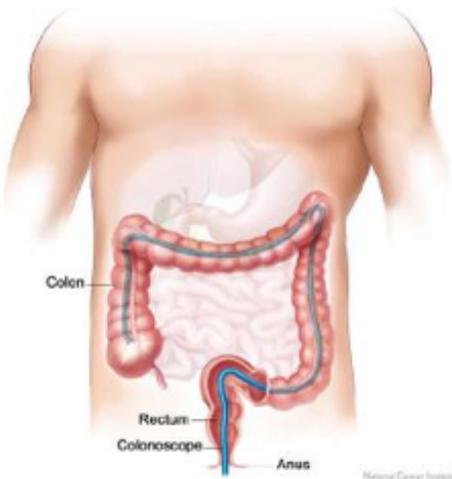


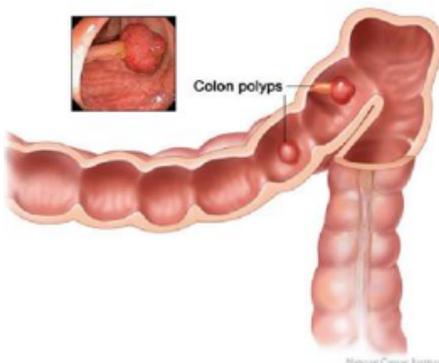
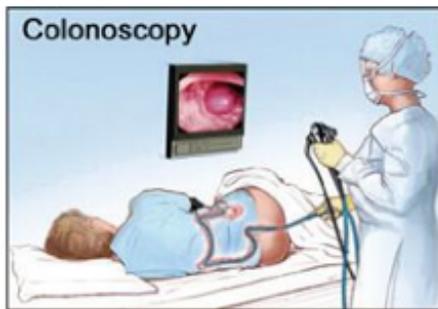
# Colonoscopy Information



## What is colorectal cancer?

Colorectal cancer is cancer of the colon or rectum. The colon is the large part of the intestine also known as the large intestine or bowel. Digested food moves from the stomach into the small, then large intestine, where nutrients are digested and absorbed. Stools are formed in the large intestine and then excreted from the colon and rectum.

Colorectal cancer begins when a small, non-cancerous, grape-like growth or polyp develops on the inside wall of the colon. In most cases polyps grow slowly over ten years and are not cancerous. Colorectal cancer can be prevented because polyps can be removed by colonoscopy before they become cancerous. If cancerous polyps are not removed they can grow larger, and then treatment is more difficult. Screening finds colorectal cancer early when the chance for a full recovery is very high.



## What is a colonoscopy?

The physician uses a long, flexible tube or colonoscope to examine the inside walls of the colon. The tip of the colonoscopy has a very small camera and light that allows the physician to see a picture of the colon wall on a television monitor. Using controls on the

scope, polyps can be removed and sent to the hospital laboratory for examination under a microscope. This is called a polypectomy.

The colon must be very clean of any stool or food waste so the colon walls can be seen clearly. You will need to take a special laxative at home the night before your colonoscopy. Preparation instructions will be given to you before your appointment.

A few minutes before the colonoscopy, a nurse will ask you about your medical history, your medications, and answer any questions you have. An intravenous line or IV will be inserted into your arm. Medication will help you relax and help to make you comfortable. You will lie on your left side with your knees bent. The colonoscope is gently inserted into the rectum. Air will be passed into the colon to help the physician clearly see the walls of the colon.

When polyps are found, the physician will remove them. The tissue samples are sent to the laboratory for examination under a microscope by a pathologist. The procedure is painless, but may cause a small amount of bleeding and blood in the stool in the next few days.

## What is a colonoscopy (continued)?

The procedure will take about 20 minutes.

After the procedure, you will rest until the medication has worn off and you are alert. Normal side effects include bloating, increased gas and mild cramps and these will pass shortly.

You can eat a normal diet and resume medications. You will require a ride home.

## What are the risks of colonoscopy?

Although serious complications are rare, there are possible complications from the colonoscopy.

Risks include:

- Tearing of the colon (or perforation), which requires surgery to repair
- Bleeding from the polypectomy (polyp removal)
- Pain or swelling from air

- A reaction to the medications or from an unknown allergy

If you have heavy bleeding, severe pain, vomiting, or a high temperature/fever, contact your physician immediately or go to the emergency department.

If you have any questions about your appointment call (807) 684-6184.