

## INSTRUCTIONS FOR COLONOSCOPY

This information has been prepared to help you understand and feel comfortable during your colonoscopy. Please read it carefully before your procedure.



### WHAT IS COLONOSCOPY?

It is a procedure where the doctor examines the inside of your large bowel using an instrument called colonoscope. Before the procedure, you may be given an injection (mild sedative) to make you more comfortable. Because of this, you should arrange for someone to take you home after the colonoscopy. It would not be safe for you to drive as you may feel drowsy. Not all patients however require the injection as some patients find the procedure tolerable and prefer to participate in the colonoscopy actively, you have a choice. During the colonoscopy, you may have the feeling of fullness, as air is introduced to see the inside of the colon. As the bowel passage is not straight, you may also experience mild cramps when the instrument passes around the corner of your colon. Apart from this, the procedure is safe and usually very well tolerated.



### WHO SHOULD HAVE COLONOSCOPY?

Your physician may recommend a colonoscopic examination if you have a change in bowel habits or experience any rectal bleeding, indicating a possible problem in the colon or rectum.



### A COLONOSCOPY IS ALSO NECESSARY TO:

- Diagnose unexplained abdominal symptoms.
- Diagnose colonic inflammation (colitis).
- Verify findings or to remove biopsy polyps or tumors located by a barium enema examination.
- Examine patients who test positive for blood in the stools.
- Monitor patients with a past history of colonic polyps or cancer.
- Examine high risk patients with a family history of colorectal cancer or familial colorectal polyposis

### HOW IS A COLONOSCOPY PERFORMED?

The bowel must first be thoroughly cleansed before a colonoscopy. This is done one day before the procedure for patients undergoing the procedure in the morning. For colonoscopy performed in the afternoon, bowel preparation may be performed in the same morning. The entire procedure usually takes 5-15 minutes. Following the colonoscopy, there may be slight abdominal distension which quickly improves by expelling of gas. Most patients can resume their regular diet almost immediately.

### WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF COLONOSCOPY?

It is possible to detect biopsy or remove most polyps with the colonoscope without abdominal surgery. Colonoscopy is more accurate than an X-ray examination of the colon in detecting polyps or early cancer. Removal of potentially malignant polyps is a major step to reduce the chances of colon cancer.

### BOWEL PREPARATION

A clean bowel is essential for this procedure. This will increase both the accuracy and safety of the test and also shorten the time needed for the examination. A poor preparation may result in the need for a repeat colonoscopy. Please follow the instructions carefully. Different consultants may use different regimens for bowel preparation.

Please follow all preparation instructions given. Your examination may be cancelled if you fail to abide by the instructions.

### POST COLONOSCOPY INSTRUCTIONS

You will be able to return to your home and drive immediately following colonoscopy if no sedation was given to you. If sedation was given, you will have to be accompanied home and you must not drive until you have fully recovered from the sedative. Any unusual abdominal pain or rectal bleeding within the next few days should be reported immediately.