



## **What is a Colonoscopy?**

A colonoscopy is a test to look inside your colon. The colon is also called the bowel, gut or large intestine. The test is done in a Gastrointestinal or “GI” Lab, or another location in the hospital. You may need a colonoscopy if you have one or more of the following problems:

- Lower abdominal (belly) pain
- Blood in your bowel movements
- Iron deficiency anemia
- Inflamed bowel (red, swollen, painful)
- To test or treat some polyps or small cancers of the colon. Polyps are lumps of tissue that bulge out from the lining of the intestine. Some polyps and small colon cancers can be completely removed during colonoscopy

When you are asleep, the doctor will gently put a flexible tube (called an “endoscope”) into your anus (rear end). This scope is a tube with a magnifying camera and light on the end. The endoscope is passed up your rectum and into your colon. The camera will take pictures of your colon. The pictures appear on a TV screen or monitor. Air may be pumped into your colon to make it bigger so the doctor can see the inside better. A sample of the skin inside your colon (a biopsy) may be taken, which produces little or no pain. The doctor may also take a stool sample. Your test will take between 15 to 60 minutes.

## **Preparing for Your Colonoscopy**

Your colon must be completely empty and clean to do the test. The instructions to clean out your colon are called the “prep.” The prep has special directions on foods, drinks and medicines. The prep is very important for the doctor to see the whole colon. Follow the prep carefully. **If you do not complete the prep before your colonoscopy, you must re-schedule the test.**

- Check the date for your colonoscopy
- Check the date and time the doctor wants you to start your prep. You may need to start your prep 1-2 days before your test
- Read the directions for your prep a few days before your test to make sure you understand them. If you have any questions, please call your doctor’s office

Call the GI Lab at 415-600-3478 (Pacific Campus) or 415-600-2570 (California Campus) if you have any questions regarding anesthesia, recent illness, etc.

It may be necessary to move up the procedure to an earlier time or delay the procedure to a later time. Therefore, if you will not be at home on the evening prior to the day of your procedure,

please call the GI Lab 415-600-3478 (Pacific Campus) or 415-600-2570 (California Campus) and Specialty Clinics at 415-600-3477 to leave a telephone number where you can be reached.

**If your child should become ill within 72 hours of the procedure, or has recently been exposed to any infectious diseases, please notify us as soon as possible:** GI Lab 415-600-3478 (Pacific Campus) or 415-600-2570 (California Campus). Specialty Clinics 415-600-3477.

### **During Your Colonoscopy**

An IV may be put into a vein in your hand or arm for giving medicine or liquids. You may be given a sedative medicine to help you feel sleep, relaxed, and less nervous. Caregivers will help you lie on your left side. You may be asked to raise one or both knees towards your chest. A sheet will cover your lower body.

### **After Your Colonoscopy**

After the procedure, the patient will recover in the recovery area for at least an hour, or until awake and coherent. The patient is then free to leave the hospital and return home. Please call Specialty Clinics at 415-600-3477 if you have questions.

### **Locations**

#### **Pacific Campus**

California Pacific Medical Center  
2333 Buchanan Street  
San Francisco, CA 94115

Admitting  
First Floor  
415-600-3676

Ambulatory Surgery Unit  
Third Floor  
415-600-3480

#### **East California Campus**

California Pacific Medical Center  
3698 California Street  
San Francisco, CA 94118

Ambulatory Surgery Unit  
Third Floor  
415-600-6252

#### **California Campus**

California Pacific Medical Center  
3700 California Street  
San Francisco, CA 94118

Admitting  
First Floor  
415-600-0900