Procedure Information

Colonoscopy

Introduction

Colonoscopy is a procedure that enables the examiner to view the inside of the large bowel. This is accomplished by passing a flexible video-endoscope through the anus into the rectum, then advancing slowly through sigmoid colon, descending colon, transverse colon, ascending colon and lastly to the caecum. The examiner can have direct vision of the colon or pathological changes inside the colon, such as tumor, ulceration or polyps. Doctor may take biopsy for pathological examination, perform polypectomy and therapeutic haemostasis when necessary.

Why is Colonoscopy performed?

1. Blood in stool
2. Anemia
3. Change in the bowel habits
4. Chronic diarrhea
5. Unexplained abdominal pain
6. Colorectal polyps / tumors
7. Colon cancer screening

Procedures

1. Patient has to lie on his left side with both knees bending towards his chest.
2. Doctor may prescribe sedation or anesthetic medication according to patient’s condition.
3. Doctor will pass the colonoscope through the anus into the colon. It is normal to feel mild abdominal distension and urging of bowel during the procedure.
4. The procedure usually takes about 30 minutes.

Possible Risks and Complications

Before examination
- Laxative for bowel preparation may cause nausea, vomiting, abdominal pain or distension, etc.

During examination
- Injection of sedation may cause hypotension, respiratory difficulties. For severe cases, anaphylaxis and anaphylactic shock may be developed. The probability of developing such symptoms is higher for the elderly.
- Perforation (2:1000); the probability of developing major complications is higher for those clients who need to have therapeutic procedure (e.g. polypectomy, endoscopic haemostasis, dilatation and insertion of stent).
- Perforation of bowel leading to peritonitis. Laparotomy under general anaesthesia may be required or repair or resection of bowel. The death rate is 5 in 100.

After examination
- May experience abdominal pain or distension etc. It will improve about one hour after examination.
- Bleeding may occur after polypectomy (1:1000), which usually happens within 24 hours of examination.

Pre-operative Preparations

1. The procedure and possible complications will be explained by the doctor and a consent form must be signed prior to the procedure.
2. Please inform the doctor if the patient is or might be pregnant.
3. Please inform the doctor if the patient currently takes any drugs or medications particularly for diabetes or that could affect blood clotting, for example:
   - Aspirin products
   - Arthritis drugs
   - Antiplatelet drugs, e.g. Plavix, Persantin, Pletaal, Pradaxa
   - Blood thinners, e.g. Warfarin (anticoagulants)
   - Insulin
   - Diabetic tablets
   - Iron supplements
   - Any Chinese medicines or herbal remedies

4. Colonoscopy can be conducted as an out-patient or in-patient. Please consult your doctor about the arrangement.

5. Presence of stool inside the bowel will affect the view of the bowel wall. Therefore, the bowel must be cleaned thoroughly before the procedure. Bowel preparation can be carried out at home or in the hospital. Please take the laxative as prescribed by your doctor.

6. Diet arrangement:
   i) Two days before colonoscopy
      The client can only consume low residue diet (avoid food which is rich in fiber, e.g. vegetable, fruit, cereal etc).
   ii) The day before colonoscopy
      Only fluid diet is allowed, such as clear meat soup and thin congee. Please do not consume too much dairy products.
   iii) On the day of colonoscopy
      No oral intake is allowed six hours before colonoscopy.

7. The patient should change into a surgical gown after removing all belongings including undergarments, dentures, jewellery and contact lenses.

**Post-operative Instructions**

1. After colonoscopy, patient should stay in bed until the sedative effect of drug has been completely worn off. It usually takes 3 – 4 hours.
   For Out-patient
   For your safety, please arrange a responsible adult to stay with you when you leave the hospital. If there is no companion, recovery bed has to be arranged for you after the procedure (additional charge for observation will be levied).

2. As doctor will pump air into the colon to enhance the visualization, it is normal to pass gases after the colonoscopy.

3. If severe abdominal pain or bleeding occurs, medical personnel must be consulted immediately.

Should there be any enquiries or concerns, please consult the attending doctor. The attending doctor will be pleased to answer such enquiries and explain to you.

Under the professional care of the doctor, you will gradually recover. We wish you all the best during your treatment and recovery.

If you have any questions after reading the entire leaflet, please write them down in the spaces provided in order for the doctor to further follow-up.

Compiled by Union Hospital Consent Form Committee
The above information is for reference only, please enquire your physician for details
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