



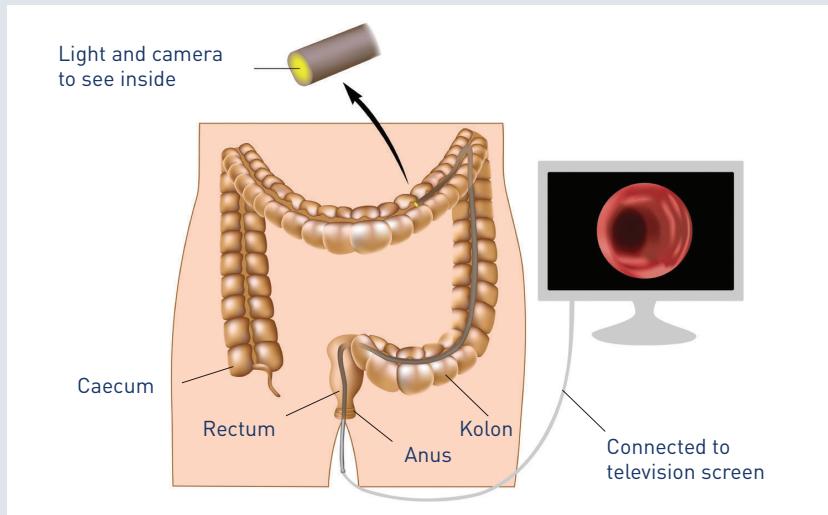
# Colonoscopy

The Department of Surgery sees patients for a wide range of surgical services. These include Colorectal, Endocrine, Breast, Upper GI, Bariatrics, Hepatobiliary, Plastics, Neurosurgery, Urology and Vascular Surgery. Our highly qualified consultants use minimally-invasive surgery and surgical endoscopy for diagnostic and therapeutic interventions in the treatment of these conditions. We provide inpatient and outpatient care with a 24-hour acute surgical service. Day surgery (endoscopy) and minor surgery (lumps and bumps) are also offered at Jurong Medical Centre.



# What is a colonoscopy?

A colonoscopy is a safe and effective method to examine the lining of the colon and rectum. It is used to diagnose colon and rectum problems to perform biopsies of lesions and remove colon polyps. Most colonoscopies are done outpatient with minimal inconvenience.



# Who should have a colonoscopy?

Colonoscopy is recommended for adults age 50 years and older as part of a colorectal cancer screening programme. Individuals with a family history of colon or rectal cancer are also advised to get a colonoscopy from 40 years old or earlier.

In addition, colonoscopy helps to:

- Examine patients with blood in their stools.
- Check for unexplained abdominal symptoms.
- Detect inflammatory bowel disease (colitis).
- Monitor patients who have a personal or family history of colon polyps or cancer.

# What are the benefits of colonoscopy?

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Colonoscopy is more accurate than X-ray in detecting polyps or early cancer. Most polyps can be removed with a colonoscopy. Removing polyps can help to prevent colon cancer.

# What are the risks?

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Colonoscopy is very safe and complications develop in less than 1% of patients.

These include:

- Missing an abnormality or very tiny polyps (1/20 patients), usually caused by inadequate bowel preparation.
- Incomplete colonoscopy caused by inadequate bowel preparation or unusual anatomy (1/100 patients).
- Bleeding after removing a polyp (1/2000 patients). It is rare that bleeding may require blood transfusion, admission to the hospital or a repeat procedure (usually minor).
- A small hole or perforation in the lining (1/2000 patients). This likelihood is higher in people with an inflammation of the bowel, frail and unwell patients, and those who just removed a large polyp.
- Reactions to sedation (very uncommon).

### **Before the procedure:**

An evaluation of your medical and family history, current medications and allergies will be done. Please inform your doctor if you are taking any blood thinning medication (Plavix, Aspirin, Warfarin), herbs, or iron supplements.

You should only drink clear liquids (e.g. broth, apple juice, and tea) 12 to 24 hours before your test. You will be required to drink the solution for bowel preparation to cleanse the colon a day before the procedure. The medical team will instruct you on the timing and the amount to be taken. On consuming this solution, it is normal to experience watery stools. Do not eat or drink four hours before your test. Your doctor may reschedule the test if there are stools left in your bowel.



### **Preparation:**

Follow all instructions given by your doctor and nurse.

During colonoscopy, you will lie on your side and be given medicine to relax. Your heart rate, breathing, and oxygen levels will be monitored.

As sedation or relaxation medications are used, please arrange for someone to accompany you home.



# How is colonoscopy done?

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A colonoscope is inserted into your rectum and advanced to the portion where the small intestine joins with the colon. As your bowel is examined, there may be polyps removed and biopsies taken (if necessary).

The entire procedure usually takes less than an hour. It is normal to feel a slight discomfort after a colonoscopy, but this will improve as you expel gas from your body. Your usual bowel movements will resume within two to three days later.

Most patients can return to their regular diet and activities the next day.

## **Post Colonoscopy:**

- If you are taking blood thinning medications such as Aspirin, the medical team will advise if you need to continue or withhold blood thinning medications after the procedure.
- If any polyps are removed or biopsies are done, the doctor will inform you about the results at the next appointment.

## Notes

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