



Colonoscopy

What is a colonoscopy?

A **colonoscopy** is the examination of the inside of the large bowel (colon).

The colonoscopy will be performed while your child is asleep under a general anaesthetic, when a long, flexible tube with a light on the end, will be inserted in the anus and rectum, and into the large bowel.

The lining of the large bowel is carefully examined and small samples of tissue (biopsies) are obtained to be sent away for laboratory testing.

A **gastroscopy** examination may be performed at the same time.

A gastroscopy is the examination of the inside of the oesophagus, stomach and the upper part of the small intestine. This involves a gastroscope (a long thin flexible tube with a light on the end) being passed into your child's mouth, down the oesophagus, into the stomach, and into the first part of the upper intestine.

These areas are examined and biopsies taken.

A **polypectomy** may be done at the same time as colonoscopy if necessary

This involves the removal of a polyp from the inside wall of the bowel.

A polyp is an overgrowth of tissue, shaped a bit like a mushroom, which can cause bleeding.

Why does your child need a colonoscopy?

The main reasons for having a colonoscopy are to evaluate the symptoms of bleeding from the bowel, diarrhoea and abdominal pain.

What preparation is needed before your child has a colonoscopy?

Special preparation is necessary prior to colonoscopy, as your child's bowel needs to be completely empty in order for the procedure to be successful.

- **For 4 days before the colonoscopy**, your child should have no foods that contain small seeds or pips
 - **No** tomato, cucumber, passionfruit, kiwifruit, nuts, corn, raw carrot etc
 - **No** wholegrain bread or wholegrain cereal
- **Iron tablets** should be stopped for 1 week before colonoscopy
- **On the day before the colonoscopy**, your child
 - May have food until time stated on appointment letter
 - May have milk until time stated on appointment letter

From then until fasting time the following day, your child is to have **clear drinks only**

Clear drinks may include

- water, clear apple juice, weak cordial , soft drink(not red or green)
 - green, camomile, peppermint tea
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- Your child will need to have special bowel washout liquid or tablets during the evening. Instructions for bowel washouts and admission details vary quite a bit, so please refer carefully to the instructions from for gastroenterologist
 - Some children are admitted to hospital on the afternoon before their colonoscopy. In order to take the full amount of bowel washout liquid, these children will usually need to have a small tube passed through the nose and into the stomach. The liquid will be given through this tube over 4 - 6 hours during the evening.
 - Most older children are able to drink the washout solution at home, and come into the hospital for a (same) day admission for their colonoscopy.

What happens on the day of your child's colonoscopy?

- Your child must fast prior to having a colonoscopy.
- Most medications may / should still be taken as usual, unless your doctor instructs you otherwise.
- Your child should have stopped taking iron tablets 1 week beforehand.
- Please check with your gastroenterologist if you have any questions relating to medications.

Possible complications

Colonoscopy is an extremely safe procedure. Complications from colonoscopy are rare when performed by doctors with specialized training and experience, and when the anaesthetic is performed by a paediatric anaesthetist.

Potential complications are

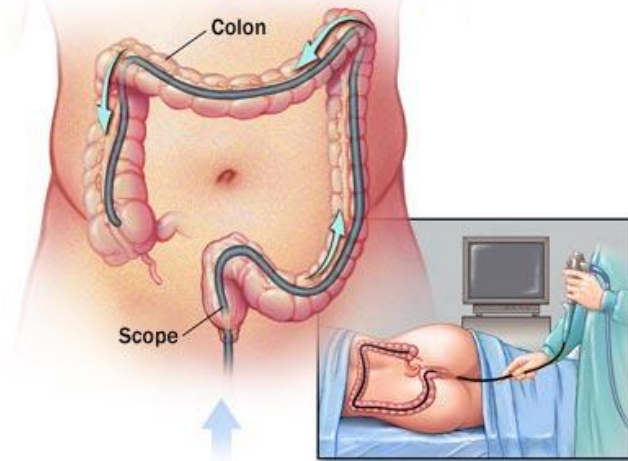
- Bleeding
- Perforation (accidental hole in the wall) of the digestive tract
- Complications relating to the anaesthetic

Having a polyp removed slightly increases the risks of bleeding and perforation .

Please contact your Gastroenterologist

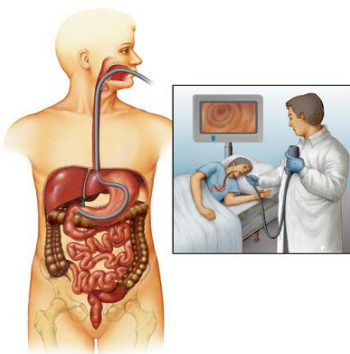
- If you have any questions relating to your child's bowel preparation or colonoscopy
- If you are unable to keep your appointment
- If your child is unwell, particularly with a fever, a bad cold or a chest infection, which may result in rebooking your child's colonoscopy for a later time

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Gastroscopy



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Care of your child after colonoscopy

Eating & drinking

- Commence clear fluids (water, cordial, lemonade) when awake.
- Progress to normal diet as tolerated.
- **Babies:** Commence breast feeding or water when awake.
Progress to formula and normal diet as tolerated.

Activity

- Rest at home for the remainder of the day.
- Children should be able to return to regular activities the following day.
- **Young adults:** due to the anaesthetic, young adults **must not** drive a car, operate machinery or make important decisions for the remainder of the day.
Young adults **must** have a relative accompany them home after the gastroscopy.

Side effects

Your child may experience one or more of the following side effects.
These are generally mild and usually don't require special treatment.

- **Nausea and vomiting**
If nausea & vomiting occur, stop all drinks and food for 1 hour.
After 1 hour slowly restart with sips of clear fluids and dry biscuits or toast.
Increase diet as tolerated.
- **Abdominal pain and bloating**
If mild abdominal pain or bloating occurs, continue to rest and take sips of clear fluids until feeling better.
- **Sore throat**
- **Pain at injection site**

When do you need to call a doctor if you are concerned when you get back home after the colonoscopy?

Call your gastroenterologist via the Royal Children's Hospital Switchboard on 03 9345 5522

- if your child vomits more than 2 - 3 times
- if the vomit contains more than 2 - 3ml (1/2 teaspoon) of blood
- if stools contain unexpected blood
- if abdominal pain or bloating become severe.
- begins to run a fever

- begins to have difficulty swallowing

Please ensure that follow up arrangements for your child have been made before leaving the hospital.

By: Di Simpson 2/11/2018