

## NAGAN, ARREGUI & DAVIS MD'S INC.

### PATIENT INFORMATION ON COLONOSCOPY

#### **What Is A Colonoscopy?**

A Colonoscopy is a procedure that enables your surgeon to examine the inner lining of the rectum and colon. It is usually done in the hospital in the endoscopic procedure room. A soft, bending tube about the thickness of the index finger is gently inserted into the anus and advanced into the rectum and the colon. It is usually done as part of a routine screening for cancer, in patients with known polyps or previous polyp removal, before or after some surgeries, or to evaluate diarrhea, bleeding or colitis.

#### **What Preparation Is Required?**

The rectum and colon must be completely emptied of stool for the procedure to be performed. The office staff will give you a Colonoscopy Preparation instruction sheet. If you do not complete the preparation, it would be unsafe to perform the colonoscopy and the procedure will have to be rescheduled. If you are unable to take the preparation, please contact the office staff.

- Prior to the procedure, you will refrain from **eating, drinking and chewing after midnight** on the night before your procedure unless otherwise instructed. You should refrain from **smoking 24 hours** before your procedure, due to the high level of carbon monoxide smoking delivers to your bloodstream. People who smoke prior to general anesthesia or sedative are more than 20 times likely to have episodes of inadequate oxygen supply to the heart (which could be interpreted as a heart attack) than non-smokers.
- You should bathe or shower the night before or the morning of your procedure.
- Some preoperative testing may be required depending on your medical condition.
- If you take medication on a daily basis, our surgeons request that only heart and blood pressure medications be taken on the morning of your procedure with a sip of water, unless otherwise instructed. **If you take aspirin, blood thinners or arthritis medication** the surgeon will discuss the proper timing of discontinuing these medications before your procedure.
- If you are on **insulin**, take half of your usual morning dose the day of the procedure, unless otherwise instructed by your doctor. Your blood sugar will be checked if needed.
- If you require **antibiotics** prior to dental procedures instruct your surgeon, you may also require antibiotics prior to your colonoscopy.

#### **What Can Be Expected During The Colonoscopy?**

The procedure is usually well tolerated and rarely causes much pain. There is often a feeling of pressure, gassiness, bloating or cramping at various times during and after the procedure. You will receive a medication through an IV in your vein to help you relax and better tolerate any discomfort that you may experience. You will be lying on your side while the colonoscope is advanced through the large intestine. The lining of the colon is examined carefully while going in and while the instrument is withdrawn. The procedure usually last for 15 to 60 minutes. In rare instances if the entire colon cannot be visualized your surgeon could request a barium enema.

#### **What If The Colonoscopy Shows An Abnormality?**

If your surgeon sees an area that needs a more detailed evaluation, a biopsy may be obtained and submitted to a laboratory for analysis. This is done by placing a special instrument through the colon- oscope to sample the lining of the colon. Sites of bleeding can be identified and controlled by injecting certain medications or coagulating (burning) the bleeding vessels. Biopsies do not imply that cancer is suspected, however, removal of a colon polyp is an important means of preventing colorectal cancer.

Generally all polyps are removed during the colonoscopy and sent to the laboratory for analysis. The majority of polyps are benign (noncancerous), but your surgeon cannot always tell by the outer appearance alone. They can be removed by burning or by a wire loop (snare). It may take your surgeon more than one sitting to do this if there are numerous polyps or they are very large.

#### **What Happens After The Colonoscopy?**

- Your surgeon will explain the results to you at your follow up visit or telephone the results.
- You may have some mild cramping or bloating from the air that was placed into the colon during the examination. This should quickly improve with the passage of the gas.
- You will be able to eat and return to normal activities after leaving the hospital. Do not drive or operate machinery until the next day, as the sedatives given will impair your reflexes.
- You will be observed after the procedure until most of the effects of sedation have worn off.
- You may not remember what your surgeon told you after the examination or follow instructions.

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