

## COLONOSCOPY

**YOU HAVE BEEN SCHEDULED FOR A COLONOSCOPY, BELOW IS A COPY OF OUR INFORMED CONSENT. PLEASE READ IT OVER CAREFULLY. YOU WILL BE ASKED TO SIGN A CONSENT FORM THE DAY OF YOUR PROCEDURE. ANY QUESTIONS WILL BE ADDRESSED AT THAT TIME.**

**THE NATURE OF COLONOSCOPY:** Colonoscopy is looking at the lining of the colon with a lighted flexible endoscope inserted through the rectum, usually under sedation – medication given through an IV to help you relax during the test. It is a very good way of looking for diseases, such as colon cancers, polyps, inflammation of the colon, bleeding sources, etc. Biopsies, specimens, and photographs will be taken as needed. Bleeding will be stopped, if possible, with cautery or the injection of medicines, and polyps removed

**LIMITATIONS OF COLONOSCOPY:** Evidence suggests that colonoscopy is the most effective means of detecting and screening for colon cancer and polyps. However, it is important to understand that no test is perfect. Colonoscopy may fail to detect approximately 3% of cancers which are present and a higher percentage of polyps. Screening with colonoscopy appears to reduce an individual's risk of developing cancer by 75-90%. Between one in 130 and one in 300 individuals undergoing screening with colonoscopy will be found to have colon cancer within 5 years of their last colonoscopy. Most of these cancers are small and can be surgically cured. However, rarely, some patients who are screened with colonoscopy may still develop incurable colon cancer.

**ALTERNATIVES TO COLONOSCOPY:** The alternatives to colonoscopy depend upon what symptoms you have, and what other tests you had. For colon, the best and most sensitive test is colonoscopy. The main alternative is to do both a Flexible sigmoidoscopy (a limited endoscopic exam) and a barium enema with air contrast. This combination is not nearly as sensitive as colonoscopy as it may miss flat bleeding lesions and up to a third of all polyps.

**THE RISKS OF COLONOSCOPY:** Colonoscopy is a safe procedure; however, it is invasive and uses IV sedatives. Side effects and complications are possible. Minor side effects are common, such as discomfort due to bloating from the air used or irritation of the vein from the IV could occur. Serious complications requiring treatment are rare. They include, but are not limited to the following as reported nationally to be:

- *Over sedation* from medications, resulting in overly slow breathing, low blood pressure, or altered heart rhythm needing treatment. (Odds: < 1 in 300) **You do have the option not to be sedated.**
- *Allergic reactions* to the medicines, such as hives, wheezing, or anaphylaxis or other adverse drug effects. (Odds: < 1 in 300)
- *Perforation* (making a hole) in the colon that would require emergency surgery. (Odds: < 1 in 400)
- *Bleeding* which could require surgery or transfusions. (Odds: < 1 in 400)
- *Splenic Injury* which could require hospitalization or surgery. (Odds: 1 per 9400 inpatient colonoscopies)

The chance that a complication of the procedure could result in death is 1 in 5000. If polyps are removed, the risk of perforation or bleeding is 1:100 per polyp removal with cautery. There are also risks if you decide not to have this procedure performed or choose an alternative test. Please note, the physicians of this practice have found their statistics for complications to be significantly lower than the national average.

**THE BENEFITS OF COLONOSCOPY:** Offsetting these risks are the benefits to your health that would result from having the test done. The best result is when a disease has a specific effective treatment that can be started early. The earlier a disease can be diagnosed; the earlier specific therapy can be instituted and the more favorable the outcome. Even if there is no true cure for a disease, symptoms can be treated, and perhaps the disease process slowed. There also is benefit from a test when the number of possible diagnoses is reduced. It also helps if worrisome diagnoses, such as cancer, etc can be ruled out.

**CONCLUSION:** The main points of colonoscopy have been addressed in this consent. For more information, please visit our website, [www.ohiogastro.com](http://www.ohiogastro.com).