

Common questions



You'll receive information from the hospital about your colonoscopy, but you may want to ask some questions of your own:

- ⊙ How long does it take?
- ⊙ Will the person doing my colonoscopy be a man or a woman?
- ⊙ Will there be any discomfort?
- ⊙ How private is the area of the hospital where colonoscopies take place?
- ⊙ What do I need to do beforehand?
- ⊙ Should I bring someone with me?
- ⊙ How will I feel afterwards?
- ⊙ What can I eat afterwards?
- ⊙ Will there be any pain relief?
- ⊙ Will my dignity be maintained?
- ⊙ What should I bring with me?
- ⊙ When will I get my results?

“
FORGET the Embarrassment thing. IT COULD SAVE your LIFE!”



Dawn
Nurse and patient

Colonoscopy
CONFIDENCE

Your common sense bowel check

An introductory guide to having a colonoscopy

#colonoscopyconfidence

If you've been asked by your doctor to have a colonoscopy it's because they suspect something isn't quite right about your bowel or colon, and they'd like a specialist to take a closer look. The procedure involves an endoscopist putting a thin flexible tube with a camera on the end up your bottom so they can see the inside of your bowel.

Colonoscopy is a very common procedure. Over 20,000 colonoscopies are carried out across the UK every year. The reason they're so common is that they're really effective. They give endoscopists a close-up view of the inside of your bowel so they can clearly see if there's anything wrong.

A colonoscopy can feel a little uncomfortable, but is an important part of maintaining good all-round health.

“
The procedure was VERY STRAIGHT FORWARD, well-organised, painless. EVERYBODY was so nice. I just couldn't fault it.”

Matthew
patient

So here's what's involved...



Before your colonoscopy you'll be asked to drink a strong laxative. This cleans your bowel thoroughly so the endoscopist can spot any changes. But it will mean frequent trips to the toilet.



When you arrive at your appointment you'll be asked to change into a gown which keeps you modest during the colonoscopy. A nurse will explain the procedure, and ask you to lie on your side. The endoscopist will then put a thin flexible tube with a camera on the end up your bottom so they can see the inside of your bowel.



It's usually painless and only takes about 30 minutes – there can be some discomfort, so you'll be offered a painkiller or sedative if you wish.



The endoscopist may remove polyps (non-cancerous growths) or tissue samples if they think anything needs a closer look.



Of all the colonoscopies taking place in the UK, only 1 in 10 people have bowel cancer. And importantly, when bowel cancer is detected at its earliest stage nearly everybody is treated successfully.



That's why if you have an appointment for a colonoscopy, it is really important that you attend – let's keep your bowel in good health.

Colonoscopy – Your common sense bowel check

Colonoscopy
CONFIDENCE

To find out more about having a colonoscopy, and to hear the experiences of other patients visit the Colonoscopy Confidence webpage.

bowelcanceruk.org.uk/colonoscopyconfidence

