

Colonoscopy

Patient information



During a colonoscopy, the inner lining of your large intestine is examined using an endoscope, a flexible tube with a small camera at the tip. The endoscope is inserted through the anus (sphincter) and advanced into the beginning of the large intestine or the last part of the small intestine. During a colonoscopy, the doctor can identify abnormalities such as inflammation, ulcers, bleeding, or polyps. During a colonoscopy, photos are taken during the procedure and stored in the electronic medical record.

This folder contains information about the colonoscopy, how to prepare for the examination, and what to expect after the procedure.

Preparation for the examination

Stool makes the intestinal wall less visible. Before this examination, it is necessary that the intestine is completely empty and clean. You achieve this by drinking a laxative before the examination. You will receive the laxative at home per mail or have received it during the intake appointment. **Important:** follow the laxative schedule provided by DC Klinieken and not the information in the laxative's leaflet. This is crucial because our instructions take into account the timing of your examination.

Medical information

If you are taking medications, we will discuss during the intake appointment whether your medication needs to be adjusted before and/or after the examination. If you are using blood thinners, we will discuss with you whether you need to temporarily stop this medication. If you have diabetes and are taking medication for it, please consult your healthcare provider (the doctor who prescribed this medication) about whether you need to adjust your medication before the examination. Always inform us about the medication you are taking. It is important never to stop medication on your own but only under the advice of a doctor. Additionally, please inform us if you have a pacemaker or ICD.

Sedation

Just before the colonoscopy, you will receive sedation. Sedation consists of a pain-relieving and possibly calming medication, which helps you relax. This medication affects your responsiveness. Therefore, you must bring a companion to the appointment or ask someone to take you home after your appointment. Unfortunately, without a companion, we cannot proceed with the examination.

Day of the examination

- We advise you to bring extra underwear and wear comfortable clothing that does not constrict.
- If you do not feel well on the day of the examination, please contact the location where you have your appointment through our Service and Information Centre (088 0100 900) and discuss whether the examination can proceed.

Daycare Unit

Before the examination, we will welcome you in the daycare unit. A nurse will assist you. You will undress your lower body and lie down on a bed. We will check your vital signs (heart rate, blood pressure, and oxygen levels) and insert an intravenous (IV) needle. Afterward, you will be wheeled into the examination room on the bed.

The examination

You will lie on your left side on the examination bed with your knees drawn up. At the beginning of the examination, we administer pain-relieving and/or calming medication. A gel is applied to the tip of the endoscope. Next, the endoscope is gently inserted through the anus. This might cause a feeling of pressure or cramping.

To unfold the intestine and get a clear view, CO2 gas and/or water are introduced through the endoscope. This can cause cramps and a sensation of urgency. Passing gas is normal and can often provide relief. Sometimes, if an abnormality is found during the examination, a minor procedure may be performed immediately. A small piece of tissue may be removed for further examination (biopsy). Alternatively, the doctor might remove polyps using a small lasso-like instrument. These procedures are not painful.

You can watch the examination on a screen. During the procedure, we might ask you to change positions occasionally. The nurse will assist you with this. By applying gentle pressure on your abdomen, the nurse can guide the movement of the endoscope from the outside.

Duration of the examination

A colonoscopy takes about 20 to 40 minutes.

After the examination

- After the examination, you will be taken back to the daycare unit. You will remain under observation for about an hour. During this time, you can rest and will be provided with food and drinks. The intravenous (IV) needle will be removed afterward.
- You may feel drowsy, dizzy, or tired for several hours after the examination. You might also have limited memory of the procedure and its results due to the medication you received.
- **The medication will slow down your reaction time. Therefore, you are not allowed to drive, operate a vehicle, work, use heavy machinery, consume alcohol, or make important decisions in the first 24 hours after the examination. Ensure that someone accompanies you and takes you home. This applies even if you are using public transportation or a taxi, and the person should stay with you for the first few hours.** You can resume regular eating and drinking after the examination. However, we recommend avoiding fatty and highly spicy meals for the first 24 hours.
- You might experience bloating due to the air introduced into your intestine during the examination. Passing gas can provide relief.
- If a polyp or piece of tissue was removed, you might notice some blood in your stool within the first 12 hours. This can persist for up to 3 weeks after the examination.

The result

After the examination, the doctor will discuss the findings with you. If a treatment was performed during the examination, an additional follow-up might be necessary, which the doctor will inform you about. If tissue was removed and needs to be examined in the laboratory, we aim to discuss the results with you approximately a week later. You will receive an invitation for a (telephone) appointment. The doctor who requested the examination will also receive the results of the examination.

Referral to hospital

Sometimes the doctor may find an abnormality during the colonoscopy that cannot be treated at DC Klinieken. The doctor will inform you of this. In such cases, we will refer you to a hospital for further treatment. We will discuss with you which hospital this will be.

Complications

A colonoscopy is a safe procedure and usually proceeds without problems. However, complications can occasionally occur.

- In very rare cases, you may experience breathing or heart problems during the examination due to the sedation. If these issues arise, the doctor will address them immediately with medication and possibly oxygen through a nasal tube.
- During the examination, a perforation (a tiny hole in the intestinal wall) can occur. For example, during the removal of a polyp. The likelihood of this happening is very small. If you experience heavy bleeding after the examination (more than 1 cup), severe abdominal pain, fever (above 38 degrees Celsius), or any other unusual reaction, please contact us immediately. See the phone numbers below for assistance.
- In very rare cases, an infection may occur after the examination. Please contact us immediately if you experience a fever (above 38 degrees Celsius) after the examination.

Resuscitation

All patients at DC Klinieken are resuscitated in emergency situations. Do you have a do-not-resuscitate declaration, or have you discussed with your doctor that you do not want to be resuscitated? In that case, it is crucial that you inform us about your preferences.

Insurance coverage

DC Klinieken has contracts with all health insurance providers. This means that almost all healthcare services are reimbursed, similar to in a hospital. However, you do need a referral from your general practitioner or specialist. Please be aware of your own risk/excess. For more information about reimbursements and possible exceptions, please refer to our website: www.dcklinieken.nl/vergoedingen.

Questions

For more information and answers to frequently asked questions, please visit our website: www.dcklinieken.nl/contact or contact our Service and Information Centre at +31 (0)88 0100 900.

Emergency after a visit to DC Klinieken

In case of emergency, call: +31 (0) 88 0100 998.

Emergency after a visit to DC Klinieken Dokkum

Patients of DC Klinieken Dokkum should call the following numbers in case of emergency after pain management or gastroenterological procedures: +31 (0) 88 0100 960 or after radiology procedures: +31 (0) 88 0100 985.

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