

Several tests have been developed to help gastroenterologists screen for colon cancer. Since the majority of all colon cancers begin as polyps along the intestinal wall, these tests are specially designed to either spot growths in the lower intestine or otherwise detect the presence of blood in a person's stool. Each test offers advantages and disadvantages – something patients should discuss in detail with their healthcare providers when deciding to undergo colorectal cancer screening in St. Petersburg. When performed regularly, colorectal cancer screenings can detect cancer before it has a chance to spread – potentially saving a life.

WHAT ARE COLON POLYPS?

A polyp in the colon can be defined as any extra tissue that protrudes into the inside (or lumen) of the large intestine (colon), but typically is due to excess of the lining (epithelium). They vary in size from microscopic to several inches in diameter.

WHAT IS CONSTIPATION?

Constipation means that a person has three bowel movements or fewer in a week. The stool is hard and dry. Sometimes it is painful to pass. You may feel 'draggy' and full. Some people think they should have a bowel movement every day. That is not really true. There is no 'right' number of bowel movements. Each person's body finds its own normal number of bowel movements. It depends on the food you eat, how much you exercise, and other things. At one time or another, almost everyone gets constipated. In most cases, it lasts for a short time and is not serious. When you understand what causes constipation, you can take steps to prevent it.

WHAT IS DIVERTICULAR DISEASE?

Diverticular disease affects the colon. The colon is part of the large intestine that removes waste from your body. Diverticular disease is made up of two conditions: diverticulosis and diverticulitis. Diverticulosis occurs when pouches, called diverticula, form in the colon. These pouches bulge out like weak spots in a tire. Diverticulitis occurs if the pouches become inflamed.

Florida Digestive Specialists



Colonoscopy FAQ'S

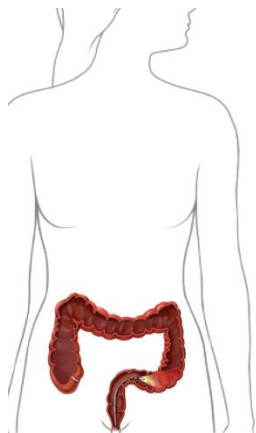
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COLONOSCOPY



A colonoscopy is a procedure that allows a gastroenterologist to view the inner lining of a patient's colon and rectum. The procedure is performed using a thin, flexible tube (a colonoscope) that is slowly guided through the colon. The end of the colonoscope is lighted and includes a camera that transmits images onto a screen in the procedure room. These images can reveal inflammation, ulcers and even cancerous or pre-cancerous growths within the colon.

Did you know...

That colon cancer is the third most common non-skin cancer in men and women? Most colon cancers begin as a small growth along the inner lining of the colon? These growths are known as polyps, and they are very common with age. Though most colon polyps are benign and will not turn into cancer, one type – adenomas – may be pre-cancerous and should be removed to prevent colon cancer.

Frequently Asked Questions

Q. How do I know if I need a colonoscopy?

A. Your physician may recommend a colonoscopy if you have changes in bowel habits, blood in your stool, an unusual abdominal pain, a history of colon polyps or a history of colon cancer in your family, or if you suffer from inflammatory bowel disease (ulcerative colitis) or Crohn's disease. Colonoscopies also can verify findings of polyps or tumors located with a barium enema exam, as well as evaluate colon inflammation, ulcerations and diverticulitis.

Q. What should I do before the procedure?

A. Always tell your doctor if you are taking any medications – particularly those that may affect blood clotting — or if you have any special medical conditions, including diabetes, pregnancy, lung or heart conditions. Also let your doctor know if you are allergic to any medications or eggs.. Your physician can answer all your questions.

Q. Is any preparation necessary before the procedure?

A. Yes. Your colon must be completely clean for the colonoscopy to be thorough and safe. There are a variety of preparations your doctor can choose from to flush the colon. In addition, you will be asked to drink only clear liquids for one or two days before the procedure and you will be given advice on taking regular medications during that time. A list of detailed instructions will be provided by your physician.

Q. What happens during the procedure?

A. On the day of the procedure you will be given medication so you will not be awake for the procedure. During the procedure, you will lie on your left side on an examining table and the physician will insert the colonoscopy into the rectum and gently move it through your colon. There are several tiny instruments in the scope that help the physician during the procedure: one to blow air into your colon, which inflates it to help the physician see, better; one to remove polyps or take biopsies; and one to stop any bleeding. After the procedure, you may experience a little discomfort, like the feeling of having gas.. The entire procedure usually takes less than 30 minutes and most people can resume their regular diet later that day.

Did you know

1 in 3 adults between the ages of 50 and 75 have not undergone recommended screening for colon cancer? That is approximately 23 million Americans who are putting themselves at risk of developing a potentially deadly cancer that may have otherwise been prevented by undergoing a colonoscopy.