

## Colonoscopy (examination of the colon) in the Day Surgery Unit

### The purpose of the examination

Colonoscopy is an endoscopic examination where an endoscope, that is a thin, flexible tube with a small camera is inserted into the colon through the rectum. The purpose of the colonoscopy is to help the doctor find out the reasons for your upset stomach, which may be due, for example, to a problem in your bowels.

### Getting ready

Your colon has to be clean so that the person carrying out the procedure can see the lining of your bowel properly. That's why the preparations before the colonoscopy are important!

### A week before the colonoscopy

You will need to take a break from medication intended for the treatment of iron deficiency and products containing fibre, such as Vi-Siblin. If you need a product for the treatment of constipation, ask at a pharmacy what you could use instead of Vi-Siblin. Avoid fruit, berries and fruit or berry desserts that contain seeds. Also, do not eat wholegrain products because they can cause a blockage in the endoscope and reduce visibility.

### Three days before the colonoscopy

Eat food that is easy to digest, such as boiled fish, potatoes, white bread, stock (for example meat or vegetable stock) and yoghurt. Don't forget to drink plenty of fluids, about 2 litres a day. If you wish, you can buy nutritional drinks from a pharmacy.

### One day before the colonoscopy

Eat a light breakfast and lunch but no evening meal. Drink plenty of fluids (such as squash, water, tea or coffee).

Start emptying your bowel. Follow the instructions on the packaging.

You can buy a bowel preparation solution from a pharmacy without a prescription or pick some up from Vaasa Central Hospital free of charge (Surgical Outpatient Clinic or Presurgical Clinic). If you live outside Vaasa, you can get a bowel preparation solution from your own health centre or a pharmacy.

Follow the instructions for bowel emptying (see attachment).

If you have a tendency towards constipation, we recommend you use Colonsteril. You may have to drink more than 4 litres to make sure your bowel is cleared out properly. If you are unable to empty your bowel properly at home, please contact your own health centre where a bed will be booked for you in a ward for the purpose of bowel emptying.

## **On the day of the colonoscopy**

Do not eat anything on the day of the colonoscopy. Instead, you must drink clear fluids (such as tea or coffee without milk, clear squash, clear stock) but avoid red juice squash. Do not drink anything during the two hours before the colonoscopy.

## **What happens during the colonoscopy**

The colonoscopy is performed under general anaesthesia or sedation (meaning you will be given a sedative). The endoscope is inserted into your bowels through your bottom. Biopsies may be taken during the colonoscopy for an examination with a microscope to be carried out later and various procedures may be carried out via the endoscope. There is a small risk of bleeding or a small tear in the bowels when removing polyps, but this is rare.

The colonoscopy will take between 20 minutes and 1 hour.

## **After the colonoscopy**

After the colonoscopy, your stomach may feel tight and bloated. You may also feel some tingling as a result of the air that was pumped into your bowels during the procedure. The symptoms will gradually disappear as the air leaves your bowels. Gentle exercise will help to get the air out.

You may eat and drink as normal after the colonoscopy, but avoid eating a big meal.

Your reactions will be slower after the anaesthesia, even if you feel sprightly and alert. That is why cycling and driving a car is not permitted until the next day.

The doctor will tell you about any discoveries made immediately after the colonoscopy. The results from microscopical tests will generally take from 4 to 6 weeks.

## **Contacting us**

Day Surgery Unit on weekdays 07.00–15.00, telephone 06 213 1552,

Your own health Centre or occupational health clinic

Telephone nursing services from 15.00–08.00 on Monday–Thursday and from 14.00–08.00 on Friday and 24 hours a day during weekends and on midweek holidays, telephone 116 117



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This instruction is intended for our patients who are in care relationship.