

Direct Referral to Screening Colonoscopy

Why have I been referred for a screening colonoscopy?

Your family doctor or nurse practitioner has referred you for a screening colonoscopy because:

a) You have completed a Fecal Occult Blood Test, and your results showed a microscopic amount of blood in your stool. A colonoscopy is needed to examine your colon (large intestine) to look for what may be causing the bleeding

OR

b) You have a family history of colorectal cancer. Either your parent(s), brother, sister, or child(ren) have had colorectal cancer, and you have a higher risk for colorectal cancer. A colonoscopy is needed to examine your colon (large intestine) to look for any early indications of cancer.

How long will I wait before I get my colonoscopy?

For a positive Fecal Occult Blood Test, most appointments for colonoscopy are booked within 2 months.

For a family history of colorectal cancer, most appointments for colonoscopy are booked within 6 months.

What Happens Now?

1. A phone call from our Screening Colonoscopy Nurse

The nurse will call you to:

- Talk to you about your relevant medical history
- Discuss the risks of the procedure
- Explain what happens during the colonoscopy
- Provide instructions on how to prepare for your colonoscopy

The Nurse will also give you an appointment date and time for your colonoscopy at Thunder Bay Regional Health Sciences Centre. The Nurse will be happy to answer your questions. Some patients will need to meet the Colonoscopist (specialized physician) for an appointment before the colonoscopy day. If this is needed, the Nurse will arrange this for you.

2. A package of information in the mail

The Nurse will mail an information package with details about your colonoscopy. You should contact the Nurse at 807-684-6184 if you have any questions or concerns about your colonoscopy.

Information for Patients

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What Happens Now?

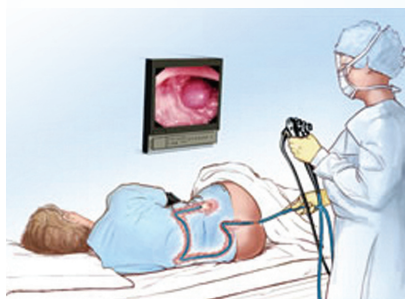
3. Reminder phone call

The Nurse will remind you, by phone, about your appointment about 1 week prior to your colonoscopy.

4. Preparation

You will need to take a special laxative (preparation) at home the night before your colonoscopy. Preparation instructions will be given to you by the Nurse. It is important to follow your preparation instructions carefully so that the colon is very clean of any stool or food waste. This is so the colon walls can be seen clearly during the procedure.

What can I expect on the day of my colonoscopy?



Arrive at the hospital 30 minutes before your appointment time and check in at the Endoscopy Department on the 3rd floor. You will have the opportunity to meet the Colonoscopist and ask him any questions you have. He will ask you to sign a consent form before your colonoscopy.

Before the colonoscopy, you will have an intravenous line or IV inserted into your arm. Medication will help you relax and help to make you comfortable. You will lie on your left side with your knees bent. The colonoscope will be gently inserted into the rectum. Air will be passed into the colon to help the Colonoscopist clearly see the walls of the colon.

When polyps (small growths) are found, the Colonoscopist will remove them. The tissue samples are sent to the laboratory for examination under a microscope by a Pathologist (specialized physician). The procedure is painless, but may cause a small amount of bleeding and blood in the stool in the next few days.

The procedure will take about 20 minutes.

What happens after my colonoscopy?

After the procedure, you will rest in the recovery area until the medication has worn off and you are alert. Normal side effects include bloating, increased gas and mild cramps and these will pass shortly.

You will require a ride home. You can eat a normal diet and resume medications.

Your family doctor or nurse practitioner will receive a report about your colonoscopy within a month of the colonoscopy. This report tells your doctor/nurse practitioner if any other testing is needed, or when you should have your next colonoscopy.



Colon Cancer Check