

## Production

© CISSS de la Montérégie-Centre  
Publication: October 2017

## Information or questions

### RLS de Champlain

Hôpital Charles-Le Moyne  
450 466-5000, extension 5035

### RLS du Haut-Richelieu–Rouville

#### Hôpital du Haut-Richelieu

450 359-5000, extension 5369

## INFORMATION ON ENDOSCOPY EXAMINATION

### COLONOSCOPY (SHORT AND COMPLETE)

Endoscopy Department

Hôpital Charles-Le Moyne  
Hôpital du Haut-Richelieu

Appointment date  
(yyyy/mm/dd):  
Appointment time:  
Physician's name:

### What is a colonoscopy?

A colonoscopy is an examination which allows the physician to view the inside of the large intestine (colon) and the rectum, with a camera.

The examination takes approximately 15 to 20 minutes, but you should plan to be at the hospital for approximately two hours. You will be monitored by the nursing staff for about 30 to 60 minutes after the examination.

### During this examination, specimens can be collected without any pain:

- Biopsies

### Treatments can be carried out during the examination:

- Polyps can be removed (small lesions in the colon);
- Bleeding in the colon can be controlled;
- etc.

### What you need to do before the examination

To ensure that the examination is as precise and complete as possible, the colon must be absolutely clear of any stool residues. Nevertheless, preparation of your colon depends on the type of examination you will be having. Your physician will inform you of the instructions to be followed before the examination. To prepare your colon properly and ensure the examination is successful, you must follow the instructions concerning the laxative medication to be taken very exactly.

A procedure concerning your diet and preparation of your intestines will be provided.

### The day before the examination

- Follow the instructions for preparing your intestine which include taking a laxative solution the day before and the morning of the examination, and keeping to a liquid diet. No red, blue or violet liquid must be taken.
- An intra-rectal enema may also be part of the preparation.

may also observe blood in your stools the first time you go to the toilet. This is normal.

- Please note that bleeding can occur for up to 7 to 10 days after a polypectomy (removal of a polyp).

### Possible complications

Complications due to a colonoscopy are rare. Nevertheless, we ask you to contact your physician or Info-Santé at 8-1-1 immediately if you feel or observe the following symptoms:

- Abundant rectal bleeding;
- Severe abdominal pain, with or without nausea and vomiting;
- Fever or shivers within 24 hours after the examination, with or without nausea and vomiting;
- Black stools.

If you are worried about your state of health in regard to the colonoscopy, contact a nurse at any time, 24 hours a day and 7 days a week, at 8-1-1.

The examination may be uncomfortable, but it is usually painless.

### General instructions

#### If you have received medication (sedation/analgesic)

- You will be kept under observation in the recovery room for 30 to 60 minutes or until your state is considered stable.
- You must not drive an automobile for at least 24 hours, nor sign any legal document, since your judgement and reflexes may be altered for several hours after the medication.
- You must avoid taking alcohol or drugs for 24 hours before and after the intervention.
- You **must** be accompanied on your return home and have a responsible person stay with you for 24 hours.

A responsible adult must, obligatorily, be present during the examination and accompany you to your home after your colonoscopy.

- Sometimes, you may have to wait for the results of laboratory tests. In view of the complexity of interpreting data during the intervention, it is your physician who will inform you of your results.

### After the colonoscopy

- You may feel some cramps or bloating in the abdomen and eliminate gas for a few hours, due to the air introduced into the colon during the examination. This discomfort will disappear in one or two hours. This phenomenon is increasingly rare now, since, usually a CO<sub>2</sub> gas is used and it is reabsorbed to be eliminated through your breathing.
- Usually, you can eat normally after the intervention.
- If you are asked to stop taking certain medications before the examination, you must begin to take them again, unless advised otherwise. Your physician or the nurse will inform you.
- Bleeding or a burn can occur following a polypectomy. The bleeding is usually minor and will stop spontaneously. You

**If you take medication, inform your physician and the nurse who will be with you before the examination or who receives you on the day of the examination.**

- Take your heart and blood pressure medications as usual. Inform the personnel of the medication you take (with or without a prescription, including natural products). You must bring the list of medication from your pharmacy.
- If you take iron, please stop taking it seven days before the examination, unless instructed otherwise.
- Advise the staff if you take anti-coagulants or antiplatelet drugs (medication to thin the blood).
- If you must stop taking certain medications before the examination, your physician or a member of our team will advise you.

### Diabetic patients

- Advise the staff if you are diabetic and take medication to control your glycemia (insulin, Diabeta, Glucophage, etc.).
- Advise the secretary's office when making your appointment. We will try to give you the earliest possible appointment in the morning.
- On the morning of the examination, do not take your pills.
- If you take insulin, please follow the instructions that the nurse will have provided before the examination.
- Please take a capillary blood glucose test (blood test from the tip of a finger) before leaving your home. You will be asked to provide the result.

**If you have a pacemaker, you must advise us if it is a defibrillator. If you do not know, please contact your cardiologist before the examination.**

**If you are allergic to latex, iodine, seafood, anesthetics, a medication or any other substance, please advise the physician or the nurse.**

## IF YOU HAVE TO CANCEL YOUR APPOINTMENT

Please advise us  
72 hours before the time of your appointment,  
by calling the telephone number below.

This will enable someone else to have their examination.

**RLS de Champlain:** 450 466-5000, ext. 5035  
**RLS du Haut-Richelieu–Rouville:** 450 359-5000, ext. 5369

If not, your absence will be  
noted in your record.

### Examination procedure

On your arrival, report to the reception desk where you will be instructed what to do. Before the examination, it is vital you remove your spectacles, contact lenses, jewelry or body piercings, etc. You must not have any metal objects on your body. Do not wear clothing containing nylon.

Then, a member of the nursing staff will receive you to explain the colonoscopy procedure. An intravenous cannula will be installed for the administration of a sedative or analgesic, if required.

In the examination room, you will be positioned lying on your left side, with your knees bent toward your body. The physician will make a rectal examination to palpate the inside of the rectum and make the anal sphincter release. You must try to relax as much as possible by breathing deeply and slowly through your mouth.

During the examination, oxygen will be administered and a device will be installed on the tip of one of your fingers to monitor the rate of oxygen in your blood. The nurse will measure your blood pressure several times during the examination.

The physician will then slowly introduce the previously lubricated flexible tube of the colonoscope into your intestine (colon). It is normal to feel a need to defecate due to the presence of this tube.

In addition, during the intervention, the physician will send air and water into the intestine in order to improve the view of the walls of the colon and to enable the colonoscope to slowly advance throughout the large intestine. You may feel cramps and hear the air which escapes from your anus, which is completely normal, since it is difficult to retain the air.

The opening of the **colonoscope** allows small instruments to be inserted in order to carry out certain interventions. In this way, if necessary, a polyp can be removed or a tissue sample can be collected (biopsy) using the colonoscope instruments. This intervention does not cause pain. The sample will then be sent to the laboratory for analysis.

At the end of the colonoscopy, you will be transferred to the recovery room where your blood pressure, pulse, respiration and comfort will be checked.

### What are polyps and how can discomfort be reduced during the examination?

Polyps are small lesions shaped like a mushroom or little balls of flesh found inside the colon. Most polyps are benign (not cancerous), but can become malignant (cancerous) over time. Removing polyps (polypectomy) is therefore an important measure in preventing colon cancer. Small polyps can be completely destroyed by a hot clamp or a little lasso (diathermic snare) through which an electric current is sent for larger polyps. This intervention does not usually cause any pain.

### To reduce discomfort during the examination

- When needed, a medication for discomfort or to help you relax will be administered. This injection may cause temporary dizziness. It will very likely make you sleepy, but you can wake up at any time. Please inform the nurse if this occurs.