



GENERAL COLONOSCOPY INFORMATION

What is a Colonoscopy?

A colonoscopy is an examination of the lining of the colon. Often during the colonoscopy, other minor procedures, such as polyp removal or biopsy will be performed. Please note that biopsies are taken for many reasons and do not necessarily imply cancer.

Screening Colonoscopy:

Patient with NO GI symptoms are referred for the following reasons:

- Age 50 and above with no risk factors
- Family History (first-degree relative) of colon cancer meeting guideline requirements.

Surveillance Colonoscopy:

Considered a screening, patient have no current symptoms but have a previously treated diagnosis of colon polyp or cancer.

- A surveillance colonoscopy is a high-risk screening.

Diagnostic Colonoscopy:

Patients are referred for a diagnostic colonoscopy for the following reasons:

- Blood in stool/hemo positive stool
- Bleeding from rectum
- Iron deficiency anemia of unknown cause
- Change in bowel habits (diarrhea, constipation)
- Persistent abdominal pain/anal pain
- Numerous other GI-related symptoms
- Repeat endoscopy for incomplete removal of a polyp

Please note:

Insurance companies and policies pay differently. Therefore, it is the patient's responsibility to check with his or her own insurance company to see if the colonoscopy will be covered. Because of the variation among payment policies, our staff cannot answer specific questions about whether your procedure will be covered. These are general guidelines to help you understand how your colonoscopy will be categorized.

Some insurance companies will change the classification from a screening colonoscopy to a diagnostic colonoscopy if biopsies are taken at the time of the colonoscopy. This can happen despite original documentation, by your provider, that the colonoscopy is being completed for screening purposes. Please check with your insurance company prior to your procedure to see if this is the case.

The guidelines for eligibility for screening colonoscopies has recently been a topic for debate. Some insurance companies will cover screening colonoscopies before the age of 50, some will deny coverage. Please check with your insurance company to ensure you



meet their coverage requirements if you are having a screening or surveillance colonoscopy before the age of 50.

Physicians are unable to change documentation or previous diagnosis to change a colonoscopy from a surveillance or diagnostic colonoscopy to a screening colonoscopy. This is considered insurance fraud and is punishable by law with fines and/or jail time. If you are contacted by an insurance representative who makes this suggestion, please document the name, date, and phone number of the insurance representative and contact our office.

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