

## Child health information factsheet

# Colonoscopy

A colonoscopy is a procedure to look at the inside of the large bowel (colon) with a long flexible camera (endoscope).

### Why your child needs a colonoscopy

Your doctor feels that a colonoscopy will help diagnose your child's symptoms and decide on treatment if needed.

If you have any questions that are not answered by this leaflet you should ask your doctor or one of the specialist nurses.

### Before the examination

We will give your child some medicine (laxative) to take the day before to help them poo a lot to clear out their bowel.

We will send you a separate leaflet explaining exactly what to do.

Your child may have some cramp like tummy pain. If the pain is severe or your child has any difficulty taking the medicine contact the nurse specialist.

### In hospital

The paediatric gastroenterology team will look after your child while they are in hospital.

They will explain the procedure and ask you to sign a consent form. It is important to let the doctor or nurse know if your child has any known allergies or has had a reaction to any drugs or tests in the past.

### The procedure

A colonoscopy for children is done in theatre and your child will be given a general anaesthetic (medicine given to make them go to sleep).

A colonoscopy is done by passing the endoscope into your child's bottom and around the bowel.

We will take biopsies (removal of small pieces of tissue) during the procedure and examine them to help with the diagnosis.

### After the procedure

We will take your child to the recovery room. When they are ready you can go with the nurse to collect him or her and go back to the ward.

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The doctor or nurse will talk to you about what was seen at the colonoscopy.

Results from biopsies will not be available for a few weeks so you may be asked to come back to the clinic for these.

Some children may need to stay in hospital for more treatment.

When your child is ready you will be given advice and discharged from the ward.

If you have any concerns at home after the procedure, contact the nurse specialists, the ward or your child's GP.

**In an emergency go to your nearest emergency department**

## **Possible risks or complications**

A colonoscopy is a safe and effective way of investigating your child's symptoms, but every procedure has risks and potential complications.

## **Complications of an anaesthetic**

Your anaesthetist will be able to talk with you about the risks of an anaesthetic.

## **Complications of an endoscopy**

Bleeding can happen from a biopsy site or from minor damage caused by the endoscope. This usually stops on its own.

Sometimes there is difficulty in passing the scope all the way around the bowel.

In very rare cases the procedure may make a hole in the colon (the risk is 1 in 1700). This is a serious complication. If this happens your child may need surgery which can involve forming a stoma (bowel opening onto the skin).

## **If you have any questions or concerns please contact**

Mick Cullen or Claire Barnes paediatric gastroenterology nurse specialists:  
**023 8077 7222** ext 3814 or **023 8077 7222** bleep **1392** or **2776**

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Braille or on audio tape, please telephone  
023 8079 4688 for help.**