

CT Colonography

Appointment Information

Date: _____ Time: _____ Location: _____

Address: _____

Notes: _____

About

CT colonography, also known as virtual colonoscopy is performed to obtain an interior view of the colon (the large intestine) that is otherwise only seen with a more invasive procedure where an endoscope is inserted into the rectum and passed through the entire colon.

During the CT colonography the technologist will begin by positioning you on the CT examination table, usually lying flat on your back or less commonly, on your side or on your stomach.

A very small, flexible tube will be passed two inches into your rectum to allow air to be gently pumped into the colon using a hand-held squeeze bulb. Sometimes an electronic pump is used to deliver carbon dioxide gas into the colon. Sometimes a retention balloon is inflated on the rectal tube to help keep the tube positioned correctly. The purpose of the gas is to distend the colon as much as possible to eliminate any folds or wrinkles that might obscure polyps from the physician's view.

Next, the table will move through the scanner. You will be asked to hold your breath for about 15 seconds before turning over and lying on their back or side for a second pass that is made through the scanner. In some centers the sequence of positions may be the opposite: facing upward first and then facing down. Once the scan is done, the tube is removed.

The entire examination is usually completed within 15 minutes

Preparations

You will be asked to change into a gown for your CT Colonography exam.

Women should always inform their technologist or radiologist if there is any possibility that they are pregnant.

The bowel-cleansing regimen for CT colonography is similar to that for a colonoscopy. You will be instructed to pick up your prep solution at the facility performing your exam. Preparations require a full 24 hours and must be started at 8:00 am the morning of the day prior to the exam. Your diet will be restricted to clear liquids the day before the examination. It is very important to clean out your colon the night before your CT colonography examination so that your radiologist can clearly see any polyps that might be present.

You should inform your radiologist of any medications you are taking and if you have any allergies.

Be sure to inform your radiologist if you have heart, liver or kidney disease to be certain that the bowel prep will be safe. Your radiologist can advise you on dietary restrictions prior to the exam. You will be able to resume your usual diet immediately after the exam.