



## Important Information about Colonoscopy

Colonoscopy is a common tool used to evaluate the colon for various problems. Screening is recommended for people without any symptoms if they are 50 years and older. The exam is also used to follow patients with a history of polyps and/or a history of colon cancer. Our goal is to remove any pre-cancerous polyps before they become a problem.

The most unpleasant part of the exam is the preparation that is required to clean out the colon. It is *absolutely imperative* that the preparation be completed as instructed in order to avoid having to cancel the exam and *repeat the preparation*.

**Note: Patients taking blood thinner such as Coumadin (Warfin), Ticlid or Plavix must stop taking medication 4 days prior to your scheduled procedure date.**

Most patients do not remember the exam because of the sedatives that we administer prior to and during the exam. The usual exam takes about 20 minutes to complete, and we will observe you for about one hour after the exam to be sure that all is well before sending you home. **It is important for you to have someone to drive you home, as it would be unsafe for you to drive as a result of the sedatives.** We also recommend that you do not plan to do anything for the remainder of the day as the effect of the drugs may linger.

The risks associated with this procedure are:

- Perforation of the colon
- Bleeding
- Unusual drug reactions

All of these problems are very unusual and occur in about 0.3% of patients or less.

It is our goal that you will have an uneventful and as pleasant an experience as possible.

### INSURANCE BENEFITS AND SCREENING COLONOSCOPIES

A screening colonoscopy is one that is done when no bowel symptoms are present, such as blood in the stool or changes in bowel habits (size, color, frequency). You may have a family history of colon cancer or polyps, but the colonoscopy is still considered to be for screening purposes.

Colorado law now requires coverage for this screening procedure. However, you should contact your insurance company to ensure that you meet their requirements for coverage.

Please note that the initial office visit is a separate charge from the colonoscopy. If you have questions or need help contacting your insurance company, we will be glad to assist you.

*The doctors and staff of Montrose Surgical Associates*