

## GASTROENTEROLOGY – Colonoscopy

### Introduction

The Covid pandemic has had a significant impact on the NHS ability to provide routine elective services. We recognise that patients are waiting longer than we would all like and it is not always possible to identify when treatment or diagnostic tests will take place. This document provides you with information on how you can support yourself while waiting to attend the hospital.

Your GP/Healthcare Practitioner has recommended a Colonoscopy; a procedure to look at the inside of your colon using a thin, flexible camera (endoscope).

### Guidance for Patients

Common reasons for having a Colonoscopy include:

- Weight loss and abdominal pain
- Rectal bleeding
- Iron-deficiency anaemia
- Changes in bowel habit
- Surveillance for conditions such as colonic polyps, Inflammatory Bowel Disease or colorectal cancer
- Family history of colorectal cancer

While you are waiting for your procedure your GP/Consultant may have recommended an alternative management or treatment to support your symptoms. It is important that you consider these options too in the short term to support your well-being. But generally, it is important that you stay as healthy as you can both physically and mentally while you wait for your endoscopic procedure.

### What should I do if my health is deteriorating?

If you feel you are becoming more unwell with the symptoms outlined above, please contact your GP or NHS 111 for medical review in the first instance. They will be able to advise if this is something they can support you with during your wait, or they will be able to direct you to the appropriate service to determine a management plan.

### Urgent Health Advice

For urgent health advice about physical or mental health, when it's not an emergency, please call 111 from any landline or mobile phone. You can also visit [www.nhs.uk](https://www.nhs.uk). The NHS 111 service is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

# My Planned Care Patient Information Platform

## Life Threatening Emergencies

For something life threatening – severe bleeding, breathing difficulties or chest pains – please dial 999.

## Contact Us

Email: [endoscopyadmissions@somersetft.nhs.uk](mailto:endoscopyadmissions@somersetft.nhs.uk)

Telephone: 01823 342400