



# Colonoscopy



My Planned Care Version 1: March 2022

The contents of this information has been reviewed and approved by the Bedfordshire Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust Governance Committee April 2022.



## Introduction

Your GP or consultant has recommended a colonoscopy. This is a procedure to look at the inside of your colon using a thin, flexible camera called an endoscope. This test can help to detect what is causing your bowel symptoms. You will be provided with a written information leaflet that details specific instructions relating to your colonoscopy and your medications, including the laxative preparation for this.

## 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 or consultant may recommend 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. These may include:

- Lifestyle changes
- Medication

In a straight forward diagnostic colonoscopy, there is 1 in 2000 chance of risk of bowel perforation.

A colonoscopy is usually done under sedation. If the procedure done under sedation, you should have somebody to take you home and stay with you overnight.

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

If you feel that there is a change in your condition please contact the team looking after you on the number in your last clinic letter.

## 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](http://www.nhs.uk). The NHS 111 service is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

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## Life threatening emergencies

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

## GP surgeries are still open

GP practice staff are also helping patients to manage their conditions at home while they wait for hospital appointments.

GP surgeries are still open and are working differently to how they did before the COVID-19 pandemic and GP practices continue to make best use of telephone, online and video consultations. Face-to-face appointments are still being given to those who need it.

## Contact us

If you have been referred to the hospital by your GP you may need to be seen in clinic before you are booked for your colonoscopy. Once you have been referred for a colonoscopy you will be contacted by telephone by our department.

If you do have any questions about your colonoscopy booking or visit please telephone:

- Bedford Hospital Endoscopy Unit: 01234 792269
- Luton and Dunstable Endoscopy Unit: 01582 497273 or 01582 718454