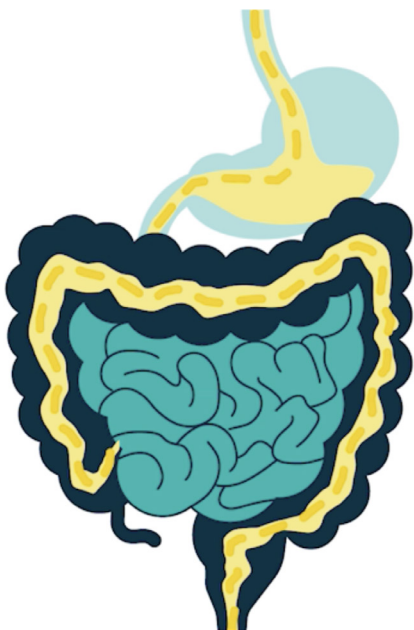


Colonoscopy  
CONFIDENCE

# Your Common sense bowel check

An introductory guide to  
having a colonoscopy



If you've been asked by your doctor to have a colonoscopy, it's because they suspect something isn't quite right about your bowel or colon, and they'd like a specialist to take a closer look. The procedure involves an endoscopist putting a thin flexible tube with a camera on the end up your bottom so they can see the inside of your bowel.

Colonoscopy is a very common procedure. Thousands of colonoscopies are carried out in the UK every week. The reason they're so common is that they're really effective. They give endoscopists a close-up view of the inside of your bowel so they can clearly see if there's anything wrong.

A colonoscopy can feel a little uncomfortable, but is an important part of maintaining good all-round health.

“

**The procedure was VERY STRAIGHT FORWARD, well-organised, painless. EVERYBODY was so nice. I just couldn't fault it.**”

Matthew  
Colonoscopy patient

## So here's what's involved...



Before your colonoscopy, you'll be asked to drink a strong laxative. This cleans your bowel thoroughly so the endoscopist can spot any changes, but it will mean frequent trips to the toilet.



When you arrive at your appointment you'll be asked to change into a gown, which keeps you modest during the colonoscopy. A nurse will explain the procedure and ask you to lie on your side. The endoscopist will then put a thin flexible tube with a camera on the end up your bottom so they can see the inside of your bowel.



It's usually painless and only takes about 30 minutes – there can be some discomfort, so you'll be offered a painkiller or sedative if you wish.



The endoscopist may remove polyps (non-cancerous growths) or tissue samples if they think anything needs a closer look.

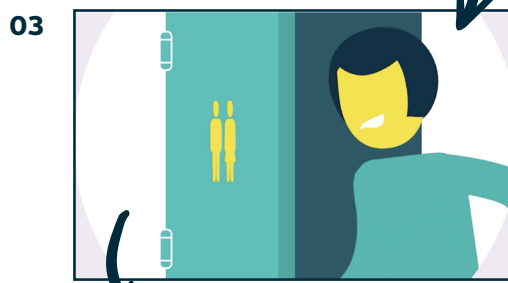


Most people who have a colonoscopy won't have bowel cancer. But, if bowel cancer is detected at its earliest stage nearly everybody is treated successfully.



That's why if you have an appointment for a colonoscopy, it's really important that you attend – let's keep your bowel in good health.

### Colonoscopy – Your commonsense bowel check



## Common questions

You'll receive information from the hospital about your colonoscopy, but you may want to ask some questions of your own:

- ✓ How long does it take?
- ✓ Will the person doing my colonoscopy be a man or a woman?
- ✓ Will there be any discomfort?
- ✓ How private is the area of the hospital where colonoscopies take place?
- ✓ What do I need to do beforehand?
- ✓ Should I bring someone with me?
- ✓ How will I feel afterwards?
- ✓ What can I eat afterwards?
- ✓ Will there be any pain relief?
- ✓ Will my dignity be maintained?
- ✓ What should I bring with me?
- ✓ When will I get my results?



**My worries about pain and discomfort turned out to be COMPLETELY FALSE. It gives you peace of mind. If it's nothing, that's fine. If they find something it's treated because it's DETECTED EARLY.**

**Dashka**  
Colonoscopy patient



**To find out more about having a colonoscopy and to hear the experiences of other patients, visit the Colonoscopy Confidence webpage.**

[bowelcanceruk.org.uk/colonoscopyconfidence](https://bowelcanceruk.org.uk/colonoscopyconfidence)