

UC Medicine Ingalls Memorial COMPUTED TOMOGRAPHY (CT) PATIENT EDUCATION VIRTUAL COLONOSCOPY WITH OMNIPAQUE

You are scheduled for CT Virtual Colonoscopy on _____ at _____.

Please report to Ingalls Hospital 20 minutes before your appointment time to register for the test.

What is a CT Virtual Colonoscopy?

CT Virtual Colonoscopy is a CT scan done in a special way that allows a radiologist to look at the large bowel (colon) to detect polyps and tumors. Polyps are small growths in the colon. They are usually benign (non-cancerous), but could become cancerous if not removed. Virtual Colonoscopy is a technique that uses a CT scanner and computer software to look inside the body without having to insert a long tube into the colon (Conventional Colonoscopy) or without having to fill the colon with barium (Barium Enema).

Why is it Important?

Colorectal cancer (CRC) is a leading cause of cancer-related death in the United States. In 2012 there were an estimated 103,170 new cases of colon cancer diagnosed in the United States and an estimated 51,690 patients died of the disease. Colorectal cancer is the second most common cancer affecting men and women. It is the most common cause of cancer death in non-smokers. Research suggests that the incidence is declining due to increase screening and polyp removal, which prevents the progression of polyps into invasive cancers. Colon cancer can be prevented if polyps are discovered and removed early.

Colon Cancer Facts

A personal family history of colorectal cancer or polyps and inflammatory bowel disease has been associated with increased colorectal cancer risk. Other possible risk factors include physical inactivity, high-fat and/or low-fiber diet, as well as inadequate intake of fruits and vegetables. Recent studies have suggested that estrogen replacement therapy and non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (aspirin) may reduce colorectal cancer risk. The risk for colon cancer increases with age and screening is recommended by the American Cancer Society for anyone 50 years or older.

Why Screen with Virtual Colonoscopy?

Virtual Colonoscopy is considered safe, non-invasive and a good screening test. It is well accepted by patients. Patients like the fact that the test takes 15 minutes and the computer does the rest. Sedation is not needed, so patients can drive immediately after the test. The vast majority of patients have a normal exam and do not require additional tests or treatment.

Radiation Exposure

The radiation dose for virtual colonoscopy is very small and much less than a routine CT scan. The Department of Radiology at UC Medicine Ingalls Memorial follows guidelines set forth by the Joint Task Force on Adult Radiation Protection to produce the highest quality images while using the lowest radiation dose possible. The Joint Task Force collaborated with the American Association of Physicists in Medicine and the American Society of Radiologic Technologists to create the Image Wisely campaign. For more information please visit the Image Wisely™ website at imagewisely.org.

Will My Insurance Pay for Virtual Colonoscopy?

Virtual Colonoscopy for screening is reimbursed by all insurance companies except Medicare. Medicare does not yet pay for screening virtual colonoscopy. As a result, patients pay for the procedure themselves if they have Medicare as their only coverage. Medicare and insurance companies will pay for diagnostic virtual colonoscopy when performed after a failed conventional colonoscopy.

How is a Virtual Colonoscopy Done?

Virtual Colonoscopy uses a very low radiation dose CT scan of the abdomen that allows the radiologist to create pictures on the computer that look like those seen by conventional colonoscopy. Patients need a cleansing preparation of their bowel before the test.

Materials Needed for Preparation

1. A 238 gram (8.3 oz.) bottle of Polyethylene glycol (PEG) 3350. Any brand such as MiraLAX®, GlycoLax® or other generic PEG 3350 is fine.
2. A 60 ounce bottle of Gatorade, Powerade or similar sports drink.
3. Bisacodyl 5mg tablet (such as Dulcolax®, Carter's® Little Pills, Correctol® or other generic brand).



4. Readi-Cat 2 (Barium sulfate 450ml)



5. Omnipaque 50 ml (This contrast agent will allow us to better visualize structures in your colon. The bottle is labeled for IV administration only. However, the same Omnipaque™ preparation is also given orally).



For your convenience, you may pick up your prep kit and contrast at the following Ingalls Pharmacy locations:

Ingalls Professional Building – 71 W. 156th Street, Harvey
Tel.: 708.915.4306

Ingalls Family Care Center Flossmoor
19550 Governors Highway
Tel.: 708.915.8453

Ingalls Family Care Center Tinley Park
6701 W. 159th Street
Tel.: 708.915.7550

Preparation

If you are taking medications do not stop taking them unless directed by your doctor.

If you are on fluid restrictions, check with your doctor before beginning this preparation.

If you have kidney disease, heart disease or a several year history of high blood pressure or diabetes, call your doctor to ask if an alternate preparation is needed. Diabetics should ask how to monitor your blood sugar during the preparation and on the day of the exam in order to keep it at a normal level.

Two days before the exam:

Starting with breakfast begin a low fiber diet. Avoid foods like beans, nuts, seeds and whole grains. With dinner drink ½ bottle Readi-Cat 2. Save the remaining ½ for tomorrow afternoon. Place in refrigerator.



One day before the exam:

Breakfast: Start a clear liquid diet (water, clear broths, juices without pulp, clear beverages, Jell-O®).

9:00am Take two 5mg bisacodyl tablets.



9:00am Mix ½ the bottle of PEG 3350 with 30 ounces of the sports drink.



Drink one 8 ounce glass of this solution every 10 minutes until it is gone. Drink each glass quickly instead of drinking small amounts continuously.

3:00pm Take two 5mg bisacodyl tablets and drink remaining ½ bottle of Readi-Cat 2.



3:00pm Mix the remaining bottle of PEG 3350 with the remaining 30 ounces of the sports drink. Drink 8 ounces every 10 minutes until it's gone. Drink each glass quickly instead of drinking small amounts continuously.



8:00pm Drink entire bottle of Omnipaque mixed with 8 ounces of clear juice, water or clear soda.



Morning of the exam:

You may take your routine medications unless they require solid food to accompany them. If you are taking insulin the dosage may need to be adjusted the day prior and the morning of the test. Contact your physician for instructions regarding dosage. If you take blood pressure medication, heart medication or Prednisone or other steroids, take it before 7:00am with a sip of water.

If you are passing **formed** stool do not come to Radiology. Call us at 708-915-COLO (2656) for further instructions.

How is the test performed?

It is not usually necessary to remove necklaces, rings or watches since we only scan the abdomen and pelvis.

The technologist will help you lie down and get comfortable on the scanning table. A small tube will be inserted into your rectum. You will be moved smoothly inside the scanner on a motorized tabletop. Carbon dioxide will be infused into your colon through the tube. The gas may cause temporary abdominal cramping. An audio system makes it possible for you to talk to the technologist or radiologist during the exam. The technologist can see and hear you at all times. You will be scanned twice, once lying on your back and once lying on your side. During the scan it is important that you lie perfectly still and hold your breath (about 10 seconds for each scan), since even slight movement can make the images blurry. The colon distention is somewhat relieved between the two scans so that you are uncomfortable for only about 5-7 minutes all together. The technologist will check the images for quality of the colon distention and a small number of patients may be scanned a third time while lying on your stomach.

After the Test

The cramping is quickly relieved and you may resume your normal activities and diet after the test.

Contacts

If you have questions about the preparation for the radiologist, call The CT Colonography Department at 708-915-COLO (2656).