

Recovery from Colonoscopy

After your colonoscopy, you'll be moved to recovery. Because of the medication, you may feel sleepy for the next 8-12 hours and you may not remember what happened.

Even if you feel awake your judgment and reflexes are slowed. You must have someone drive you home after the procedure. Do not return to work, drive, operate machinery, drink alcohol or sign legal documents until the next day.

Because air was pumped into your colon you may feel bloated, have mild cramps and gas. You will feel more comfortable if you expel this gas. These minor side effects should go away within 24 hours, but if they don't or if they become more severe, call your doctor.

Although complications from a colonoscopy are rare, it is important to recognize early signs of possible problems. Contact your doctor if you notice severe abdominal pain, fever and chills, rectal bleeding, or redness or pain at the IV site.

Your doctor will discuss the results of your colonoscopy following the procedure. If any tissue samples were taken your doctor will contact you to review the results once they become available.

Your doctor will give you instructions on how to care for yourself when you get home, including what medications to take. Don't overdo it. Start out eating lightly and gradually increase the amount of food you eat. Most people are completely recovered the following day.

A colonoscopy is a great tool for early detection of lower digestive tract conditions, so treatment can begin, if needed.