



What is a Virtual Colonoscopy?

Virtual Colonoscopy is a procedure that produces two and three-dimensional images of the colon (large intestine) from the rectum to the lower end of the small intestine. This procedure is commonly used to diagnose bowel and colon disease eg. polyps, diverticulosis and cancer.

What should I expect when I have my Virtual Colonoscopy?

At the clinic you will be taken to a change room where you will be asked to change into an examination gown. All metal objects such as keys, clips, buttons, coins and mobile phones etc must be removed. The risks and possible complications will be discussed with you prior to the procedure and with your acceptance we will proceed.

You will then be taken to the CT scanning room where you will be asked to lie on your side on the scanning table and a thin tube will be inserted into the rectum. You may experience slight discomfort but this should only last a few moments. The technician will then ask you to lie on your back while air is pumped into the tube to inflate the colon. You may experience a slight cramping feeling that may last for the duration of the examination. The air allows our technician to provide better images of the colon. The scanning table will then move through the CT scanner and you will be asked to hold your breath during the scan to avoid distortion of the images. We will then repeat this scan with you lying on your stomach. This procedure generally takes 20-30 minutes. The three dimensional images produced by the computer allow the Radiologist to identify any abnormalities in the bowel.

Are there any risks or side effects from my Virtual Colonoscopy?

As with all medical procedures there are risks. Your doctor has sent you for this test knowing that the information provided by the scan is more beneficial than the very low risk associated with it. The skill of the operator and the design of the machine will ensure you receive the lowest radiation dose possible. Female patients who are pregnant or think they may be pregnant must advise the staff immediately, as a CT scan is not usually performed during pregnancy unless it is an absolute medical necessity to do so. The risks and possible complications will be discussed with you prior to the procedure.

How do I prepare for my procedure?

At the time of your booking one of our friendly staff will advise you of the preparation and requirements of this scan. You will need to collect a bowel preparation kit from the Exact Radiology Clinic where you are having your scan performed and this will be discussed with you in detail at this time. This preparation will commence at lunchtime the day prior to your appointment.

Things to bring along to my appointment:

- Previous films for area of clinical interest.
- Medicare or Department of Veteran Affairs card (as we bulk bill all eligible Medicare services).
- Referral (this is a legal requirement).

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