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TEACHING SHEET FOR COLONOSCOPY

Colonoscopy is an outpatient procedure in which the rectum and the inside of the large intestine (colon, bowel) are examined. Your doctor has recommended that you have a colonoscopy, after his/her careful examination.

During the procedure, a colonoscope (a long, flexible instrument about ½ inch in diameter) is used to view the lining of the colon. The colonoscope is inserted through the rectum and advanced to the large intestine. If necessary, small amounts of tissue samples can be removed for analysis (biopsy) and polyps (small growths) can be seen and removed.

Let the doctor/nurse know such things as: if you have any allergies, if ever you were told to take antibiotics before a dental or surgical procedure, ever had endocarditis, an artificial heart valve, or rheumatic heart disease, and also if you are taking any blood thinning medications.

Your family member, significant other or driver may be asked to sit in the waiting room during the procedure. After the procedure you will go to the recovery room, and that is where your doctor will discuss the findings of your procedure with you and your family.

You will be asked to sign a consent form giving the doctor the permission to do this procedure. You are asked to wear a gown, and remove dentures and glasses, if you wear them.

An I.V.(intravenous) will be started in one of your arms.

You will be lying on your left side during the procedure.

You are given a pain reliever and a sedative intravenously (in your vein through the I.V. line).

You will feel relaxed and drowsy.

The doctor inserts the scope through the rectum and advances into the large intestine. A small amount of air is used to do this. You may feel mild cramping (gas pains).

The procedure last 30 minutes to 1 hour.

You will stay in the recovery room for about 45-60 minutes for observation. You may be drowsy. The nurse will take several blood pressure checks, offer you something to drink and give you and your family member, significant other or driver written discharge instructions. You will be encouraged to pass the gas, to relieve “ gas pains” you may be feeling.

Many people do not recall the procedure because of the sedation effects of the medication. Do not drive today or anything that takes alertness or concentration. Today is a day of rest.

A responsible adult must accompany you home. Do not drive or operate machinery for the remainder of the day.