

Virtual CT Colonoscopy

Colon cancer is the second most common cause of cancer death in the country, with close to 150,000 cases diagnosed each year. Nearly all colorectal cancers start as benign polyps, which rarely cause symptoms. Colorectal cancer screening is the only effective way to identify polyps before they become cancerous.

Conventional colonoscopy, used to detect and remove colon polyps, colorectal screening and to diagnose other colonic conditions, involves passing a thin, flexible tube into the colon under mild anesthesia.

Virtual CT Colonoscopy is a non-invasive radiological procedure that enables your physician to detect polyps in the colon with minimal discomfort to you. The technique combines the CT scanner and computer technologies to provide a virtual 3D tour of the colon, revealing polyps as small as 6 mm. Virtual CT Colonoscopy does not require anesthesia and takes only 15 minutes to complete.

Am I a Candidate for Virtual CT Colonoscopy?

Virtual CT Colonoscopy is available to most patients. However, **it is not recommended** for a person is less than 50 years of age and someone with one of the following conditions:

- Recent unintentional weight loss of greater than 10 pounds
- Recent experience of GI discomfort, change in bowel habits, anemia or bleeding
- Diagnosed inflammatory bowel disease (such as Crohn's or Ulcerative colitis)
- A Family history of colorectal polyps or cancer or Familial Adenomatous Polyposis or hereditary non polyposis colorectal cancer

What should I expect?

During the procedure:

- You will be placed on your side and the radiology technologist will insert a small, soft, flexible tube into your rectum. Carbon dioxide will be slowly pumped through the tube to expand your colon.
- Two separate CT scans will be taken; one lying on your stomach and one on your back. You will be asked to hold your breath about 20 seconds with each scan.

After the procedure:

- You may resume normal diet and activities.
- If no colon abnormalities are found, you will be asked to continue colorectal screenings every five years.
- If a polyp or growth is detected, your physician will provide further instructions, which usually includes conventional colonoscopy. In some cases, this can be completed on the same day. Working in partnership with our GI colleagues, driver etc.

How do I arrange to have a Virtual CT Colonoscopy?

Like traditional colonoscopy, Virtual CT Colonoscopy requires a physician's order. You should check with your insurance company about coverage before scheduling a Virtual CT Colonoscopy. Coverage varies and is rapidly changing.

Bowel preparation for a Virtual CT Colonoscopy?

This information is provided by Cleveland Clinic and is not intended to replace the medical advice of your doctor or health care provider. Please consult your health care provider for advice about a specific medical condition.

The colon must be completely clean so that the radiologist can clearly view the colon lining and accurately diagnose any problem.

- One week before your Virtual CT Colonoscopy, stop eating seeds and nuts.
- Three days before the procedure, stop eating high residue foods such as bran, cereals, salads, raw fruit and brown bread.
- One full day before your Virtual CT Colonoscopy, ingest only clear liquids.
- The afternoon before the procedure, ingest a prescribed bowel cleansing preparation laxative and bowel contrast medicine

To Request an Appointment:

We welcome your questions and concerns. To schedule an imaging appointment, please call 216.444.6919 or fax your request to 216.636.0159.

Locations for Virtual CT Colonoscopy:

Beachwood Family Health Center
26900 Cedar Road

Cleveland Clinic Elyria at Chestnut Commons
303 Chestnut Commons Drive

Westlake Imaging Center
850 Columbia Road

Cleveland Clinic Main Campus
9500 Euclid Avenue, Desk HB6

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