

# The COLONOSCOPY

## A colonoscopy is a routine, safe, and effective procedure

that healthcare providers use to visually examine the full lining of the colon and rectum. This procedure is the best way for a healthcare provider to view the entire colon to see if there are any problems.

## What happens during a colonoscopy?

- A colonoscopy involves the use of a colonoscope—a long, thin, flexible instrument connected to a camera and video display monitor
- The colonoscope is inserted into the rectum and moved through the entire colon
- If the healthcare provider notices anything of concern during the colonoscopy, a biopsy (removing a small amount of tissue to examine) may be performed



Colonoscope

## What is the colonoscope looking for?

A colonoscopy makes it possible to find and remove growths that exist in the colon. From colon disease to abnormal tissue growths, a colonoscope allows the healthcare provider to investigate without surgery.

## Who should get a colonoscopy?

People 50 and older should undergo a colonoscopy every 10 years. If you have additional risk factors, healthcare providers could recommend the procedure be completed more frequently.

## A routine colonoscopy could save your life

It may surprise you to discover that colon cancer is preventable if the early warning signs are detected through a colonoscopy. Still, less than half of Americans 50 and older undergo a colonoscopy.<sup>1</sup>

### ADHESIONS

- Abnormal bands of tissue that grow in the body
- Similar to scar tissue
- Most commonly caused by abdominal surgical procedures
- Common complication is intestinal obstruction—where an adhesion wraps around the intestine and prevents flow of the digestive tract
- May relieve itself or require medical intervention

### FLAT POLYP/LESION

- This is another precancerous growth on the colon wall
- If caught early, can be removed, aiding in the prevention of colon cancer
- Difficult to detect without effective prepping and an accurate colonoscopy

### POLYP

- An abnormal tissue growth on the wall of the colon
- Usually slow growing and the first sign of potential colon cancer
- The colonoscopy is one of the most accurate methods of detection

- If caught early, polyps can be removed, aiding in the prevention of colon cancer
- Symptoms may not be noticeable

### ULCERATIVE COLITIS

- A form of inflammatory bowel disease that includes inflammation and sores, called ulcers, in the lining of the rectum and colon
- Ulcers form where inflammation destroys the cells of the colon wall, eventually bleeding and producing pus
- Colon inflammation will make the colon empty frequently, causing diarrhea

### APPENDICITIS

- A condition characterized by inflammation of the appendix
- Mild cases may resolve without treatment, but most require removal
- Removal is typically performed using minimally invasive surgery

### CROHN'S DISEASE

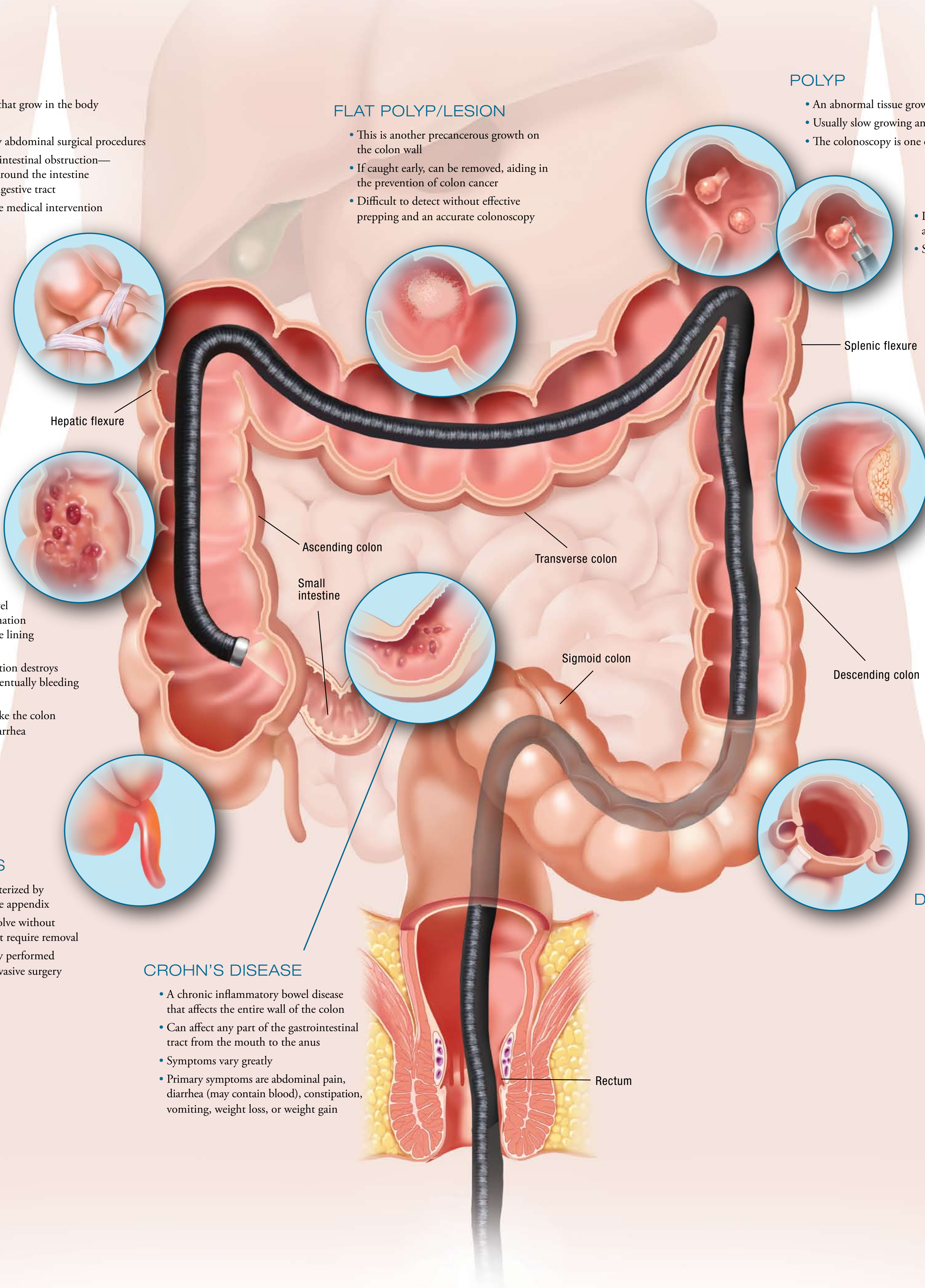
- A chronic inflammatory bowel disease that affects the entire wall of the colon
- Can affect any part of the gastrointestinal tract from the mouth to the anus
- Symptoms vary greatly
- Primary symptoms are abdominal pain, diarrhea (may contain blood), constipation, vomiting, weight loss, or weight gain

### CANCER

- If polyps or lesions are left undetected, they can develop into cancer
- Generally, polyps grow very slowly
- Early detection and removal is essential to cancer prevention
- Colonoscopy is the key to early detection and prevention

### DIVERTICULITIS

- Involves the formation of pouches (diverticula) on the outside of the colon
- Results when pouches become inflamed or infected due to blockage, possibly by feces or food particles
- Symptoms may include abdominal pain, fever, nausea, vomiting, chills, cramping, and constipation



Colon cancer is the second leading cause of cancer-related death in the United States.<sup>2</sup>

- 148,000 new cases diagnosed per year<sup>3</sup>
- 55,000 deaths per year<sup>3</sup>

**Talk to your doctor about scheduling a colonoscopy.**

Visit [www.salix.com](http://www.salix.com) for full Prescribing Information for OsmoPrep and MoviPrep. Colonoscope photo courtesy of Olympus<sup>®</sup>

**References:** 1. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Colorectal cancer screening rates. Available at: [http://www.cdc.gov/cancer/colorectal/statistics/screening\\_rates.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/cancer/colorectal/statistics/screening_rates.htm). Accessed April 12, 2007. 2. Foundation for Digestive Health and Nutrition. Colorectal cancer fact sheet. Available at: <http://www.fidhn.org/wmspage.cfm?parm1=210>. Accessed April 12, 2007. 3. Cancer stat fact sheets: cancer of the colon and rectum. Available at: [http://seer.cancer.gov/statfacts/html/colorect\\_print.html](http://seer.cancer.gov/statfacts/html/colorect_print.html). Accessed April 12, 2007.

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