# Colonoscopy

A camera test to look inside your large bowel

## What is it?

A colonoscopy uses a thin, flexible tube with a small camera on the end to look at the inside of your large bowel (colon) and back passage (rectum). During the test the doctor can also take small tissue samples (biopsies) or remove polyps.

## Why is it done?

- To find the cause of changes in bowel habit, bleeding from the back passage, tummy pain or unexplained anaemia
- To screen for bowel cancer and check for polyps, small growths that can turn into cancer over time
- To remove polyps and take biopsies

## Before your procedure

- Your bowel must be completely empty. Take the bowel preparation (laxative) exactly as instructed, usually the day before.
- Tell your doctor about all your medicines, especially blood thinners, iron tablets and diabetes medicines.
- Follow the fasting instructions you are given.
- Arrange for a responsible adult to take you home.

## On the day

- You will usually be given a sedative and pain relief to keep you comfortable.
- You lie on your side while the tube is gently passed into the back passage. Air is used to open the bowel, which can cause some cramping.
- The test usually takes 30 to 60 minutes.

## Afterwards

- Bloating and wind are normal and usually settle within a few hours.
- If a polyp was removed, a small amount of blood in your stool can be normal for a day or two.
- If you had sedation, do not drive, drink alcohol, operate machinery or sign legal documents for 24 hours.

**Get medical help straight away if**

You have severe tummy pain, heavy or ongoing bleeding from the back passage, a high temperature, or you feel very unwell.

## Questions about your procedure?

For more information about the specifics of your procedure, please call our reception on **083 323 8990** or email **reception@odt.com.na**.