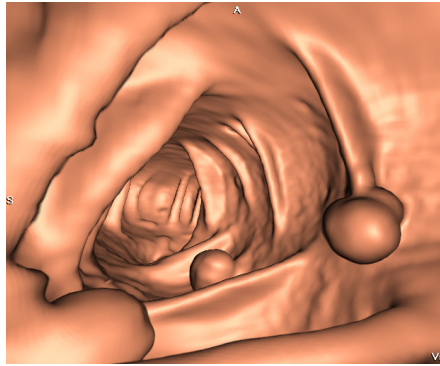


What is CT Virtual Colonoscopy?

Virtual Colonoscopy is a medical imaging exam that uses computed tomography (CT), sometimes called a CAT scan, and advanced computer software to produce two- and three-dimensional images of the colon that can be viewed on a computer monitor.

The major reason for performing virtual colonoscopy is to screen for polyps or cancers in the large intestine. Polyps are growths that arise from the inner lining of the intestine. Some polyps may grow and turn into cancers. The goal of screening with colonoscopy is to find these polyps in their early stages, so that they can be removed before cancer has had a chance to develop.



Pictured above is an example of how polyps may appear to a Radiologist when viewing a Virtual Colonoscopy

American Cancer Society

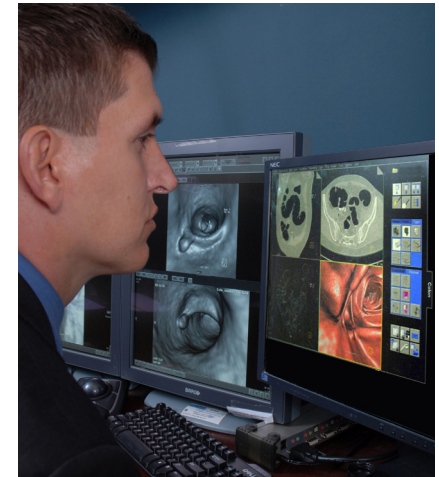
The American Cancer Society (ACS) estimates that nearly 150,000 men and woman are diagnosed with colorectal cancer (CRC) and almost 50,000 will die of the disease every year - this is the 3rd most common cancer diagnosed and the 2nd leading cause of death from cancer in the United States. The American Cancer Society and US Preventive Services Task Force recommend virtual colonoscopy as an alternative to traditional colonoscopy, when indicated.

American Cancer Society guideline for colorectal cancer screening:

- Beginning at age 45, both men and women are at average risk for developing CRC
- People at increased or high risk of CRC should begin screening before age 45 and/or be screened more often. Your risk is higher if you have:
 - A strong family history of CRC or certain types of polyps
 - A personal history of CRC or certain types of polyps
 - A personal history of inflammatory bowel disease (ulcerative colitis or Crohn's disease)
 - A known family history of a hereditary CRC syndrome such as familial adenomatous polyposis (FAP) or Lynch syndrome (also known as hereditary non-polyposis colon cancer or HNPCC)
 - A personal history of radiation to the abdomen (belly) or pelvic area to treat a prior cancer

What are the benefits of CT Virtual Colonoscopy?

- Less invasive than traditional colonoscopy
- Exam takes less time (30 minutes) than a traditional colonoscopy
- Sedation and pain relievers are not needed, so there is no recovery period
- Patients can return to normal activities immediately after the procedure
- Lower risk of complications than traditional colonoscopy
- Ideal for patients with an increased risk of complications, or patients who cannot tolerate a traditional colonoscopy
- Helpful when traditional colonoscopy cannot be completed because the bowel is too narrow, obstructed, elongated, or tortuous
- Visualizes the entire bowel
- Proven effective in large clinical trials



Radiologist, Peter Poulos M.D.

What happens during the test?

After changing into a gown, you will lie on your right side on the CT scanner table. A nurse will place a small soft tube into your rectum and administer CO2 gas. As your bowel distends, you may experience a temporary bloated feeling and mild discomfort. You will be scanned initially lying on your back, then on your right side. If needed, you may also be scanned lying on your stomach.

Stanford Health Care Imaging Services Advantage

- State-of-the-art technology: The latest generation CT scanners
- Abdominal radiology subspecialist interpretations
- Extensive experience in 3D imaging
- Utilizes CO2 gas instead of air to inflate the colon. The gas is absorbed by the body and causes less cramping and bloating than air, thus ensuring that patients have a better experience.
- Patient-centric environment

CT Virtual Colonoscopy Exam Preparation:

Just like prep for a traditional colonoscopy, your colon must be as empty as possible. In addition to laxatives, a CT virtual colonoscopy requires “contrast agents.” These are special materials you will drink to coat your colon. These make the images easier to interpret and are essential for the exam.

For seven (7) days before your appointment date:

1. Do not take iron (ferrous sulfate) pills.
2. Do not eat foods with seeds, such as poppy, tomatoes, watermelon, and cucumbers. Do not eat celery, grapes, blueberries, corn, green peas, beans, seaweed, popcorn, or nuts.
3. If you take insulin, the dose may need to be adjusted during your prep day and the day of the exam. Contact the doctor who manages your diabetes for instructions.

Additional instructions, depending on your medical history, will be provided by the pharmacy with your bowel prep prescription.

The Stanford Endoscopy Center is no longer offering same-day optical colonoscopy if polyps or other abnormalities are found on the CT Virtual Colonoscopy. If polyps or other abnormalities are found, radiology nursing will advise you to contact your referring physician prior to eating or drinking post CT Virtual Colonoscopy.

For more information, go to:
stanfordhealthcare.org/ctvirtualcolonoscopy



Stanford Radiology Scheduling Center
Phone: 650-723-6855 Fax: 650-723-6036



CT Virtual Colonoscopy



Information for Patients and Families

