

## IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT YOUR COLONOSCOPY

### **FAQs:**

#### **What is a colonoscopy?**

A colonoscopy is a direct visual inspection of the entire length of your large intestine (colon). The exam is performed after cleansing the colon and is done while you are sedated to ensure your comfort. Since colonoscopy is a visual inspection, the accuracy is directly related to the quality of the bowel cleansing. Please read and follow the enclosed preparation instructions carefully.

#### **Why do I need a colonoscopy?**

Colon cancer is a significant health problem in the United States, and it is the leading cause of cancer in non-smokers. Most people agree that colon cancer usually starts as a small, benign growth called a polyp which can turn into cancer slowly over time. Colonoscopies are performed on healthy individuals to find and remove these polyps. Removing polyps can greatly reduce your risk of developing colon cancer. There are other forms of colon cancer screening available; however, colonoscopy is considered the gold standard. Screening usually begins at age 50, although it may begin sooner if you have certain risk factors.

#### **What are the risks?**

As with most medical procedure, there are infrequent risks associated with colonoscopy. These include, but are not limited to, risks of bleeding, perforation and sedation problems. In the case of colonoscopy, the benefits far outweigh the risks. This is why it is recommended that everyone undergo colorectal cancer screening. You will be asked to sign a consent form stating that you understand these risks, and that you choose to proceed with the colonoscopy. A copy of this consent form is included in your packet for your review prior to your arrival.

#### **What can I expect to happen on the day of my exam?**

When you arrive at Surgery Center at Tanasbourne, you will check in at the front desk. Please bring a picture ID and your insurance card (if applicable). Once registration is complete, you will be escorted to the pre-op area where our staff will prepare you for your procedure. Once you are ready, the physician performing the colonoscopy will meet with you to discuss your exam further, review the risks and benefits, and to answer any remaining questions.

Our goal is to make sure you are as relaxed, comfortable and prepared for your procedure as possible to allow for a complete and thorough evaluation of your colon. If you have any additional questions about your colonoscopy, please contact our office at 503-216-9500.