Having a colonic stent inserted

What is a colonic stent?
Your doctor has recommended the placement of a stent in your colon to improve your symptoms of a blockage in your bowel. A stent is a self expanding, wire mesh tube that is designed to hold open the blocked area in your bowel.

The doctor will place the stent using an endoscope, which is a long, narrow camera that is inserted through your back passage into your bowel and will allow him to look directly at the area to be treated. When the stent is in the correct position it will expand to around 20 millimetres in diameter, and the symptoms of bloating, nausea, constipation and pain, should be relieved.

The procedure is performed within the Xray department to enable us to use radiological imaging to ensure correct placement of the stent.

Are there any complications?
Complications are uncommon. Serious complications are rare, and include perforation (making a hole in the bowel) or bleeding. These occur in around 1% of procedures. A significant perforation of the bowel may require an operation.

Less serious complications include 'stent migration' where the stent becomes displaced. This occurs in 5% of cases. The stent often passes by itself but may have to be removed. The stent may also become blocked, often due to tumour growth, occurring in around 18% of cases.

There are very low risks associated with giving the intravenous sedation required to undergo the procedure.

The doctor and nurse will be happy to discuss any questions or concerns you may have.
How should I prepare?
Before the stent can be placed, the bowel downstream of the blockage must be flushed free of waste. Usually this involves having a rectal enema to clear the lower bowel, which will be administered on the ward by a nurse before coming down for the procedure.

Will it be painful?
You will have a cannula (small plastic tube) placed in your hand or arm through which you will be given a sedative and pain relieving drugs. Although you will not be fully asleep, you will be relaxed and drowsy. A nurse will be with you all the time to ensure that you are comfortable.

You should expect some discomfort at times including episodes of cramp-like pain in your abdomen and bloating. This tends to come and go during the procedure but the nurse will help you through.

What will happen afterwards?
You will be cared for in the recovery area after your procedure. The nurse will monitor your recovery by checking your oxygen levels, heart rate and blood and ensure you are comfortable.

Patients will be returned to the ward once we are satisfied that they are comfortable after the procedure.

If you have any queries regarding your colonic stent place please call the Endoscopy Unit on:

01895 279214
Monday - Friday 0900 hrs -1700 hrs
Languages/alternative formats

Please ask if you require this information in other languages, large print or audio format. Please contact: 01895 279973

Fadlan waydii haddii aad warbixintan ku rabto luqad ama hab kale. Fadlan la xidhiidh 01895 279 973

Jeżeli chciałbyś uzyskać te informacje w innym języku, w dużej czcionce lub w formacie audio, poproś pracownika oddziału o kontakt z biurem informacji pacjenta (patient information) pod numerem telefonu: 01895 279973.

如果你需要這些資料的其他語言版本、大字体、或音頻格式，請致電01895 279 973查詢。

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