



VETEMIS
R E F E R R A L S

Colonoscopy

Introduction:

At Vetemis Referrals, we are committed to offering advanced diagnostic and treatment options for your pet. This guide explains colonoscopy, why it may be recommended, how to prepare, and what to expect during and after the procedure. If you have further questions, our team is always here to help.

What is a Colonoscopy?

Colonoscopy is a minimally invasive procedure that allows the veterinary surgeon to examine the lining of the lower gastrointestinal (GI) tract, including the:

- Colon: Ascending, transverse, and descending sections.
- Rectum: Final portion of the large intestine.
- Ileum: The last part of the small intestine, if needed.

A flexible endoscope equipped with a camera and light is gently inserted into the rectum to provide a detailed view of the intestinal lining. This procedure is highly effective in diagnosing and treating GI conditions without requiring invasive surgery.

Indications for a Laparoscopic Colonoscopy?

A colonoscopy may be recommended to investigate:

- Chronic diarrhoea or excessive mucus in stools.
- Blood in stools (bright red or black).
- Straining or pain during defecation.
- Unexplained weight loss or reduced appetite.
- Suspected intestinal polyps, tumours, or inflammation.

The procedure is also used to collect tissue samples (biopsies) for laboratory testing to differentiate between inflammatory and cancerous conditions.

What are the risks?

Anaesthetic Risks

- Reactions to sedation or anaesthesia, particularly in pets with pre-existing conditions such as heart, liver, or kidney disease.

Procedure-related Risks

- Minor Bleeding: Biopsy sites or polyp removals may cause minor bleeding, which usually resolves quickly.
- Perforation (Rare): In very rare cases, the endoscope or instruments may cause a small tear in the intestinal lining. This may require additional treatment or surgery.
- Infections: The procedure may occasionally lead to infections, particularly if a pre-existing disease is present.

Our experienced team takes every precaution to minimise these risks and ensure a successful outcome.

Colonoscopy Procedure

Pre-Operative Consultation

- Pre-clinical examination of your pet.
- Procedure discussion with a senior surgeon.
- For long-distance clients, a clinical examination may be carried out by your local vet and a phone consultation will be arranged with one of our senior surgeons prior to surgery.
- Medical Review: Please inform us of all your pet's medications, including over-the-counter treatments. Certain drugs, like steroids or NSAIDs, may need to be paused, and special instructions apply for pets with conditions like diabetes or heart disease.

1

Admission & Preparation

- **Food:** Withhold food for **48 hours** prior to the procedure to ensure the GI tract is empty.
- Cats should fast for only **12 hours** to avoid complications such as hepatic lipidosis.
- **Water:** Allow free access to water or a meat-flavoured electrolyte solution until the morning of the procedure.
- A team member will discuss the procedure, answer your questions, and obtain your consent.
- Your pet will have a clinical examination, and blood tests may be performed to ensure they are healthy enough for anaesthesia.
- An intravenous catheter will be placed to administer fluids, anaesthesia, and medications.

2

Colonoscopy Procedure

- Under general anaesthesia, the endoscope is gently inserted into the rectum and guided through the colon to assess the intestinal lining.
- Biopsy samples may be collected for laboratory analysis, and treatments such as polyp removal or stricture dilation may be performed if needed.

The procedure typically takes 15–30 minutes but may vary depending on the findings and treatments performed.

3

Recovery & Monitoring

- Your pet will be monitored closely after anaesthesia to ensure a smooth recovery.
- A small, bland meal will be offered before discharge.

4

Home Recovery

- Keep your pet calm and indoors (or on a lead for dogs) for 24 hours after the procedure.
- Monitor for mild diarrhoea or a small amount of blood in stools, which may occur for 24–48 hours but should resolve on its own.

5

Next Steps & Follow Up

- Test results (e.g., biopsy or fluid analysis) are typically available within 7–10 days, and we will contact you to discuss the findings.
- Follow-up appointments will be scheduled to assess your pet's progress or provide further treatment if necessary.

Further information

When to contact us:

Contact us if you notice:

- Persistent diarrhoea or blood in stools.
- Vomiting, lethargy, or loss of appetite.
- Unusual swelling or discomfort.

Contact Us

To Refer a routine case, please use the referral form on our website.

Call:

01543 373 033

Email:

Referrals@vetemis.co.uk

Our Services

To see our full list of services, visit:
www.veterinaryendoscopy.co.uk

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