

COLONOSCOPY

What is a Colonoscopy?

- ▶ A colonoscopy is a test to look inside your colon.
- ▶ A colonoscopy is done by a gastroenterologist, a doctor trained in looking at the gastrointestinal (GI) tract.
- ▶ The main tool used to look inside the colon is a **colonoscope** (see image below).
 - The colonoscope is a long, thin (about the width of your little finger), flexible tube with a tiny camera and a light on the end.
 - The colonoscope is long enough to look at all of the large bowel and even the lower part of the small intestine.



Source: The Endoscopy Division of FUJIFILM Medical Systems U.S.A., Inc.



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- ▶ A colonoscopy is a **safe and effective** way to look for GI health issues and sometimes even treat those health issues.
- ▶ It's important to get a **high-quality colonoscopy**.
 - Keep in mind that high cost doesn't necessarily mean high quality.
 - Ask your doctor how often he or she reaches the end of the large intestine and how often he or she finds polyps.



The Colon

- The colon, or large intestine, is the last part of your digestive tract.
- It starts at the cecum, which attaches to the end of the small intestine.
- The colon is made up of a hollow tube about five feet long that:
 - Takes in water and minerals from digested food.
 - Ends in the rectum, the last part of the large intestine, which stores undigested solid waste.

