

Colonography Over Colonoscopy in Patients on Blood Thinners

Westside Medical Imaging has developed special protocols for patients in need of colonoscopy who take anticoagulant blood thinners such as Coumadin (warfarin) or antiplatelet medications including aspirin, and Plavix (clopidogrel). Patients with the following conditions may be placing themselves in danger if they stop their blood thinners or antiplatelet medications for any amount of time: Atrial fibrillation, stroke, mechanical heart valve and drug eluting coronary stents.

A recommendation for patients who are taking these medications and in whom interruption of these medications places them at increase risk of heart attack and stroke will be to consider virtual colonoscopy. Otherwise known as CT colonography, it is an approved screening exam for colon cancer and colon polyps that does not require stopping anticoagulants and antiplatelet medications. WMI uses the ultra-modern Siemens 64-slice CT scan to obtain optimal colon imaging. Virtual colonography can be performed with the usual bowel preparation to insure optimal imaging without the need for general anesthesia which is necessary for conventional colonoscopy. With this examination taking only 1 hour without general anesthesia, most patients can immediately return to carrying out their normal activities.

If you or your patient is taking either Coumadin (warfarin), Plavix (clopidogrel) or aspirin and there is a need to undergo routine colon cancer screening, consider CT colonography. Please contact Westside Medical Imaging at 310-623-1150 or check our website at www.westsidemedimaging.com.