Handout 7.1 (PATIENT VERSION)

General information for medical procedures

Medical investigations tend to cause or worsen anxiety. Each investigation has its own preparation, instructions, and post-investigation follow-up plan. Some procedures can be invasive and require special preparation, such as fasting the night before the test or interrupting certain medications, especially blood thinners and diabetic medication. It is therefore crucial for you to inform the treating doctors of your medications and any allergies.

To prepare for a test, it is important that you ask about the test, what it involves, why the doctor is recommending it, how it will help your care, whether there are specific risks involved, and whether there is an alternative test. Some tests do not need to be repeated if they have been done previously. Therefore, you should inform the treating doctors of similar recent tests, especially: computed tomography (CT) scans, magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) scans, gastroscopy, and colonoscopy.

Keep in mind:

- ✓ Important information about the tests will be explained verbally and in a written handout.
- ✓ You should enquire about what happens before, during, and after the tests.
- ✓ You should read and follow the instruction carefully.
- ✓ You may be sedated or anaesthetised to have the test done.
- ✓ You should ask about the level of sedation before the day of the test, as this helps to ensure you don't get any surprises on the test day.
- ✓ When any sedation is used, it is important to have someone who can take you home and stay with you after the test.

This handout was written by Dr Tuan Duong and Professor Jane M. Andrews based upon their chapter entitled "Common gastrointestinal investigations and psychological concerns" (Chapter 7) from Knowles, S.R., Keefer, L., & Mikocka-Walus, A. (2019). Psychogastroenterology with Adults: A Handbook for Mental Health Professionals. Oxon, UK: Routledge Press.

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