

Preparing for Your Colonoscopy

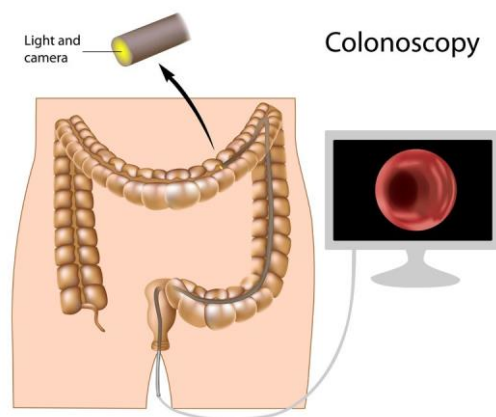
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You have been scheduled for a colonoscopy. This information will help you get ready. Follow the instructions on this page (both front and back sides). The most important thing you can do to prepare for your colonoscopy is to follow the instructions for cleaning your colon (bowel). This is often called bowel preparation, or “prep”.

What is a colonoscopy?

A **colonoscopy** is a test to look at your colon. The test will help find problems such as growths (polyps), tumours, redness (inflammation), and areas of bleeding.

You will be given medicine to help you relax (a sedative) before and during the colonoscopy. During the colonoscopy, a tube with a camera on the end is put through the rectum and into the colon. Pictures are sent to a computer screen. Your doctor will look for anything that is not normal.



How do I prepare for my colonoscopy?

You **must** do all of the following things before your colonoscopy:

- ✓ **Follow the bowel preparation instructions (see instructions on other side).** Plan ahead and make sure you get the PEG (Colyte, Golytely, Peglyte) liquid medicine at least 2 days before the test.
- ✓ Make plans for someone to drive you home after the procedure. **The test will not be done with sedation unless you have an adult to drive you home and stay with you.**
- ✓ **Medications:**
 - ✓ If you are **diabetic**, **DO NOT** take your diabetic medication (insulin or pills) on the morning of your procedure unless otherwise instructed
 - ✓ If you take **blood thinners**, be certain that you understand your doctor's orders for stopping or continuing them prior to your procedure.
 - ✓ **TAKE ALL OTHER REGULAR MEDICATIONS** unless you have been instructed otherwise by the doctor

Why is it important to follow the bowel preparation instructions?

Your bowel must be clean so that your doctor can properly see your colon. If your bowel is not properly cleansed, the doctor may not be able to see problems in your colon (like polyps or cancer) and you may have to do the test again.

Bowel Preparation Instructions

Bowel preparation includes changing your diet and drinking the liquid medicine called PEG (Colyte, Golytely, Peglyte). The PEG solution causes severe watery diarrhea, which empties your colon. It is important that you follow these instructions.

5 days before your colonoscopy **Date:** _____ (you can fill in the date)

- Stop eating any foods that have seeds, such as grapes, berries, cucumbers, sesame seeds, poppy seeds, and figs. **Do not follow the bowel prep container or package instructions for eating and drinking.**
- Stop eating corn or popcorn

2 nights before your colonoscopy **Date:** _____ (you can fill in the date)

- Take a laxative (medication that prevents constipation) of your choice.
- Constipation is when you have less than 3 bowel movements (poo) a week.

The day before your colonoscopy **Date:** _____ (you can fill in the date)

1. Drink only clear fluids

- **Do not** have any solid food or milk products.
- **Drink** at least 2 liters of clear fluids, such as: fruit juice (no pulp), water, soft drinks, Gatorade, clear broth, Jell-O, popsicles, coffee or tea with no milk (you may add sugar).
- **Do not** drink only water. Electrolyte containing drinks, such as Gatorade, are ideal.
- **Do not** drink any liquids that are **red** in colour.

2. Drink the first half of the PEG solution

- Add water to the powder in the bottom of the container (follow the package instructions on the container). Make sure that the powder is dissolved.
- **At 7:00 pm the evening before your test**, drink 2 litres (one half) of the PEG solution over a 1 hour period.

The PEG solution will cause severe watery diarrhea. Stay close to a toilet.

The day of the colonoscopy **Date:** _____ (you can fill in the date)

1. Drink the second half of the PEG solution

- **4 hours before you leave for the hospital**, drink the remaining 2 litres of PEG solution over a 1 hour period. This may mean you have to wake up very early, but it will lead to a clean bowel and an easier and more effective test.
- Drink only clear fluids up until 2 hours before the colonoscopy appointment time, then do not drink anything until after the test is over.

If you are unable to finish the PEG solution during this time, continue to drink the rest as quickly as you can. If you cannot finish it, bring any remaining PEG solution to your appointment on the day of your test.