

COLONOSCOPY - Frequently Asked Questions

Q: What should I expect during the prep?

A: Feeling bloated, chilled and/or nauseous are common after the first few glasses, due to the large volume of fluid ingested. This is temporary and will improve once bowel movements begin. Most people have a bowel movement within two hours of starting the laxative. Sometimes, there may be a delay up to four hours. Stay close to a bathroom. Wet wipes, soft toilet tissue, and Tucks may help with irritation after numerous bowel movements. Desitin (or diaper paste) will help create a barrier, and cause less irritation from frequent wiping.

Q: I drank all of the prep and my stools do not look like water or lemonade. What do I need to do?

A: Drink one bottle of magnesium citrate ASAP. After this, if you still cannot see through your stools, call the number provided to prevent your procedure from being rescheduled

Q: I seem to be all cleaned out but I haven't finished my laxatives, do I have to finish them?

A: Yes. You must follow the preparation instructions given to you. Your colon is approximately 6 feet long and must be completely emptied to help ensure an accurate and thorough exam.

Q: I feel nauseous. What should I do?

A: You can take a short break from drinking the laxatives. Try drinking ginger ale or another clear liquid to help settle your stomach. Continue your prep when the feeling has subsided.

Q: I started my laxatives and I haven't had a bowel movement yet. What should I do?

A: Some patients have a bowel movement immediately after starting the laxatives and for others it may take 2 hours or longer. Continue drinking clear liquids and following your bowel prep instructions.

Q: I already have diarrhea before starting my prep, do I still have to take all of the laxatives?

A: Yes. You must follow the preparation instructions given to you. Your colon is approximately 6 feet long and must be completely emptied to help ensure an accurate and thorough exam.

Q: Can I drink anything other than water?

A: Yes! It is important that you drink a variety of allowed clear liquids to avoid the possibility of becoming nauseated and dehydrated. Clear liquids include: apple and white grape juice or other non-citrus juices without pulp, Gatorade, ginger ale, diet or regular 7-Up, Sprite or colas, Kool Aid, water, clear broth, Popsicles, honey and hard candies without filling. Also included in a clear liquid diet is black coffee or tea without cream or powdered creamer and Jell-O without added fruit.

Q: Can I take my medications before the procedure?

A: Yes, except the certain medications mentioned on your colonoscopy instruction page. Please carefully review the instruction page. Generally, you should take prescribed medication, as

directed, both on the preparation day and on the day of the procedure. Please review your colonoscopy instructions for medications that CANNOT be taken.

Q: Can I take my antianxiety medications the morning of my procedure?

A: Yes. You may take your antianxiety medications with a small sip of water.

Q: I am diabetic. What should I do about my insulin?

A: Call the physician that manages your diabetes and tell them of your prep. That physician should determine how to change your insulin dose.

Q: How long will the colonoscopy take?

A: The procedure usually takes 30-45 minutes. You should plan to be at the facility for approximately 3 hours. The amount of time may vary from patient to patient.

Q: Why can't I drink or consume anything red or purple during my clear liquid diet?

A: When you consume something red or purple it has an appearance of blood in the colon. To help ensure an accurate exam, these liquids should be avoided.

Q: Why do I have to stop drinking six hours before I come in?

A: We ask that you stop all clear liquids six hours prior to your procedure to allow your stomach to empty. If there are liquids in your stomach when given sedation, those liquids could be aspirated into your lungs causing serious complications.

Q: Can I chew gum during the prep?

A: Yes.

Q: Can I have sugar in my coffee/tea during my clear liquid diet?

A: Yes. You may use sugar or sugar substitutes in your drinks during your clear liquid diet.

Q: Can I have cream in my coffee/tea?

A: No. Avoid all dairy products including milk, cream and powdered creamer.

Q: Can I smoke during the prep?

A: Yes.

Q: Can I brush my teeth the morning of my procedure?

A: Yes. Do not swallow any liquid.

Q: Can I have soup during my clear liquid diet?

A: You can only have broth. You may not have noodles, meat or vegetables.

Q: Can I have a colonoscopy if I am having my menstrual period?

A: Yes.

Q: Why can't I eat popcorn 5 days before my procedure?

A: The hulls from popcorn can stay in the colon for days. During your procedure the hulls can appear to be growths in the colon. Popcorn hulls also clog the scope.

Q: When can I eat after my procedure?

A: Generally, you can eat immediately after your procedure avoiding greasy or spicy foods. You may not have a full appetite until the following day.

Q: After the procedure, when will I have a normal bowel movement?

A: Because your intestines were completely cleaned out for your procedure, it may take a couple of days of eating solid foods before you have a bowel movement.

Q: Why can't I drive myself home after my procedure?

A: Due to the sedation given during the procedure, you are considered legally impaired. The sedation medication impairs your judgment and reflexes. You will not be permitted to drive until the day following your procedure.

Q: Can I take a bus or a taxi home by myself after my procedure?

A: No. Due to the sedation given during the procedure, you are considered legally impaired. The sedation medication impairs your judgment and reflexes. A trusted person must be with you to drive you home or accompany you on public transit.

Q: If I do not feel well, should I come in?

A: If you feel ill, or have a fever greater than 100.4 degrees F, please call to speak with a nurse.

Q: Will I be awake for this procedure?

A: During deep sedation you will not be easily awakened. You are expected to sleep throughout the procedure.

Q: When can I expect the results of my procedure?

A: Please allow 10 business days for results.

Q: How do I reach you if I have further questions?

A: Call our scheduler between 8:00am-4:30pm at 316-261-3130 ext. 286
Before or after hours please call 316-261-3130