

Bowel preparation instructions for Colonoscopy appointments

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| **What is Picolax?**  **Picolax is a preparation used to clear the bowel before some investigations and/or surgery. It comes as a powder that when mixed with water makes a solution, which you are then able to drink as instructed. It works by increasing the activity of the bowel and also by holding water in the bowel, which helps to wash it out.** |

You should expect frequent bowel actions and eventually diarrhoea. Some intestinal cramping is normal. Using a barrier cream, such as Vaseline, locally after each bowel action will help to reduce soreness around the anus.   
  
***Please make sure you are near a toilet once commencing your bowel prep***

**7 days before your procedure** - Stop taking all iron tablets but continue all other medication.   
  
**4 days before your procedure** - Stop taking any constipating agents i.e. lomotil, codeine phosphate etc, but continue all other medication.   
  
**2 days before your procedure** - Eat foods which are low in fibre. Avoid foods such as fruit, green, vegetables, cereals, baked beans and brown bread. Choose foods from the ‘foods allowed’ list below.

**Have plenty to drink - at least ½ pint/ 1 glass, each hour *(If you are having an endoscopy at the same time, please stop drinking fluids 2 hours before your appointment)***

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| **IMPORTANT INFORMATION**  If you take **clopidogrel, warfarin or aspirin** please ensure that your Consultant / Anaesthetist is aware and has provided you with specific advice in relation to when to stop these medicines if applicable.  If you need to have **antibiotics** when you have your teeth taken out; if you have had rheumatic fever or if you have an artificial valve in your heart, you must tell the doctor because you may need to have some antibiotics before your test.   Also, please let us know if you have any of the following as we may need to make special arrangements   * you have diabetes * you have glaucoma * you have had a heart attack in the last six months * you are waiting for heart surgery * you are waiting for coronary angioplasty * you have a pacemaker * you have any allergies * you have ever had a reaction to an anaesthetic or medication |

**If you have any queries about your preparation or procedure, please phone the hospital switchboard on 0208 337 6691**  
  
**Morning appointment**  
  
If you have a **morning appointment**, start the diet at midday the day before.

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| **Time** | **Instruction** |
| 12-12.30pm | Liquid Lunch (i.e. clear soup, yoghurt, juice etc) from the list of permitted foods only. |
| 1pm | Drink plenty of fluids (a large glass of water, fruit squash or a large cup of Tea or Coffee). |
| 2pm | Dissolve the contents of one sachet of picolax in a glass of water. Stir for 2-3 minutes then drink the mixture. If the mixture becomes hot allow to cool sufficiently then drink. |
| 2-6pm | Drink plenty of fluids every hour. |
| 6pm | Dissolve half the second sachet of picolax in water and drink as before. |
| 7pm | Diet Supper: Clear soup or Bovril only. No solid food. Continue to drink plenty of fluids. |

**The morning of your test:** Between 6-7am dissolve the remaining half sachet of picolax in water and drink as before. Continue with clear fluids only. No solid food until after your appointment.   
  
**Afternoon appointment**  
If you have an **afternoon appointment**, eat normally until 4pm the day before.

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| **Time** | **Instruction** |
| 4pm | Drink fluids (large glass of water or fruit cordial or a large cup of tea or coffee) |
| 5pm | Drink fluids |
| 6pm | Dissolve one sachet of picolax in a glass of water. Stir for 2-3 minutes then drink the mixture. If the mixture becomes hot allow to cool sufficiently then drink. |
| 7pm | Drink fluids. |
| 7-8pm | Diet suppers: Clear soup or Bovril only. Plenty of fluids. |
|  | **The morning of your test** |
| 7-8 am | Take one sachet of picolax as before. |
| 8am | Drink plenty of fluids. No solid food until after your appointment. |

**'Allowed' foods list**

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| **Foods allowed (small quantities)** | **Foods not allowed** |
|  Tender lean meat, poultry, ham, liver, kidney, fish.   Fruit flavoured or set yoghurt   Potatoes – boiled, mashed, roast or chips (no skins)   Well cooked cauliflower florets (no stalks), carrots, turnip or swede   Consommé or strained soup   Soft tinned fruit in natural juice, except those with pips   White bread, white flour, white rice and pasta   Water biscuits, cream crackers, Rich Tea, plain sponge cake   Plain scone (no fruit)   Jelly jam, jelly marmalade, honey, syrup   Tea, coffee (sugar allowed)   Tomato juice, strained fruit juices   Squash and fizzy drinks\* A small amount of alcohol   Water |  Tough, fibrous meat, hamburgers, beef burgers, sausages, faggots   Sausage rolls, pasties. Pies and pastries   Whole fruit yoghurts, Muesli yoghurt   Jacket potatoes, where skins are eaten   All vegetables not listed on the left   Baked beans   Thick vegetable soup   All fruit not listed on the left   Whole meal and granary bread   Wholemeal flour   Brown rice and whole wheat pasta   High fibre crisp breads, digestives, hob-nobs   Cakes containing dried fruit, nuts or coconut   All nuts and dried fruit   Jam or marmalade with skin or pips   Peanut butter   All high fibre breakfast cereals, porridge, bran   Cheese, cottage cheese or cheese sauce   Butter, margarine and fats and oils |

**Advice for patients with diabetes**

Do not administer insulin or take tablets to control diabetes on the day of the procedure, prior to the procedure.

Monitor blood sugar levels frequently and if they are lower than normal, drink sugary drinks to increase.

**NOTE: If your Consultant has given you specific instructions, you should follow these instead of the above!**