Understanding Colonoscopy

***What is a colonoscopy?*** Colonoscopy enables your doctor to examine the lining of your colon (large intestine) for abnormalities by inserting a flexible tube as thick as your finger into your anus and slowly advancing it into the rectum and colon. If your doctor has recommended a colonoscopy, this brochure will give you a basic understanding of the procedure - how it's performed, how it can help, and what side effects you might experience. It can't answer all of your questions since much depends on the individual patient and the doctor. Please ask your doctor about anything you don't understand.

***What preparation is required?***  You may select from one of several options that we provide later in this document. In general, the preparation consists of consuming a special cleansing solution and clear liquids and special oral laxatives. You must drink plenty of Gatorade type liquids on the day before the test in addition to the preparation. The colon must be completely clean for the procedure to be accurate and complete, so be sure to follow your doctor's instructions carefully. The America College of Gastroenterology recommends a split dose preparation for superior cleaning. This is described in detail later. There is at least a 4% chance of not being able to see cancer or polyps during the exam.

***What happens during colonoscopy?*** Colonoscopy is well tolerated and rarely causes much pain. You might feel pressure, bloating or cramping during the procedure. Your doctor will give you a sedative to help you relax and better tolerate any discomfort. You will lie on your side or back while your doctor slowly advances a colonoscope through your large intestine to examine the lining. Your doctor will examine the lining again as he or she slowly withdraws the colonoscope. The procedure itself usually takes 15 to 60 minutes, although you should plan on two to three hours for waiting, preparation and recovery. In some cases, the doctor cannot pass the colonoscope through the entire colon to where it meets the small intestine. Although another examination might be needed, your doctor might decide that the limited examination is sufficient.

***What if the colonoscopy shows something abnormal?*** If your doctor thinks an area needs further evaluation, he or she might pass an instrument through the colonoscope to obtain a biopsy (a sample of the colon lining) to be analyzed. Biopsies are used to identify many conditions, and your doctor might order one even if he or she doesn't suspect cancer. If colonoscopy is being performed to identify sites of bleeding, your doctor might control the bleeding through the colonoscope by injecting medications or by coagulation (sealing off bleeding vessels with heat treatment). Your doctor might also find polyps during colonoscopy, and he or she will most likely remove them during the examination. These procedures don't usually cause any pain.

***What are polyps and why are they removed?*** Polyps are abnormal growths in the colon lining that are usually benign (noncancerous). They vary in size from a tiny dot to several inches. Your doctor can't always tell a benign polyp from a malignant (cancerous) polyp by its outer appearance, so he or she might send removed polyps for analysis. Because cancer begins in polyps, removing them is an important means of preventing colorectal cancer.

***How are polyps removed?*** Your doctor might destroy tiny polyps by fulguration (burning) or by removing them with wire loops called snares or with biopsy instruments. Your doctor might use a technique called "snare polypectomy" to remove larger polyps. That technique involves passing a wire loop through the colonoscope and removing the polyp from the intestinal wall using an electrical current. You should feel no pain during the polypectomy.

***What happens after a colonoscopy?*** You will go home after you are awake enough. Your physician will explain the results of the examination to you, although biopsy results will be available one week later.

***You must arrange for someone to drive you home and stay with you.*** Even if you feel alert after the procedure, your judgment and reflexes could be impaired for the rest of the day. You might have some cramping or bloating because of the air introduced into the colon during the examination. This should disappear quickly when you pass gas. You should be able to eat after the examination, but your doctor might restrict your diet and activities, especially after polypectomy.

***What are the possible complications of colonoscopy?*** Colonoscopy and polypectomy are generally safe when performed by doctors who have been specially trained and are experienced in these procedures. One possible complication is a perforation, or tear, through the bowel wall that could require surgery. Bleeding might occur at the site of biopsy or polypectomy, but it's usually minor. Bleeding can stop on its own or be controlled through the colonoscope; it occasionally requires follow-up emergency treatment. Some patients might have a reaction to the sedatives or complications from heart or lung disease.

Although complications after colonoscopy are uncommon, it's important to recognize early signs of possible complications. Contact your doctor if you notice severe abdominal pain, fever and chills, or rectal bleeding of more than one-half cup. Note that bleeding can occur several days after polypectomy.

***Colonoscopy preparation instructions:***

Because education is an important part of comprehensive medical care, you have been provided with this information to prepare you for this procedure. If you have questions about your colonoscopy, alternative tests, the cost of the procedure, methods of billing, or insurance coverage, do not hesitate to speak to your doctor or our office staff. Most endoscopists are highly trained specialists and welcome your questions regarding their credentials and training. If you have questions that have not been answered, please discuss them with the endoscopy nurse or your physician before the examination begins. You can also schedule a video conference appointment with your physician to discuss the procedure if you wish. **NAUSEA AND VOMITING ARE POTENTIAL PROBLEMS WITH EVERY PREPARATION. You can try taking this with hard candy, sucking on a lemon, mixing with Crystal Light, and/or drinking very slowly to help tolerate the prep and avoid nausea and vomiting.**

My Colonoscopy is scheduled for:

Place: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Arrival Time: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Procedure Time: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Laxative Prep Number: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Please notify us if you will not come for the appointment, and there will be a deposit kept on hold for future appointments if you miss the appointment or reschedule more than twice.

***What to eat and what to avoid before the procedure?***

For 5 days before the exam: DO NOT eat corn, nuts, plain seeds, or foods containing seeds.

**DO NOT EAT SOLID FOOD THE DAY BEFORE THE EXAM**.

***What you CAN eat the day before the procedure:*** Drink clear liquids the entire day before the exam. Options for clear liquid include: Jell-O’s (not red or orange or green Jell-O),Popsicle, Freeze Pop, Chicken Broth, Beef Broth, Vegetable Broth, 7-UP, Sprite, Ginger Ale, Orange Juice, Gatorade, Apple Juice which are essentially any liquids you can see through. Please avoid milk, dairy products and red juices or anything red. Red dyes may make it look like you have had bleeding. Read the instructions below for the laxative prep and follow them carefully. It is ok to have coffee the day before the procedure.

***Morning and day of the procedure:***

It is very important **not to drink anything at all WITHIN TWO HOURS** of the procedure.

**If your colonoscopy is scheduled for 12 noon or before:** Do not drink anything after midnight, except for medications with a small amount of water, and the laxatives and water needed for the colonoscopy. Those who choose to do the split dose laxative prep will be taking laxatives and water early in the morning. You may only have sips of water with medication by 7AM AND NO LATER. DO NOT EAT SOLID FOOD OR DRINK ANY OTHER LIQUIDS ON THE DAY OF THE PROCEDURE. IF YOU ARE DIABETIC, YOU MAY HAVE APPLE JUICE AT LEAST TWO HOURS BEFORE THE PROCEDURE.

**If your colonoscopy is scheduled after 12 noon**: You may have a very light clear liquid breakfast (NO SOLIDS) **before** 8 AM and the laxative prep if you are taking a split dose laxative. Those who choose to do the split dose laxative prep will be

taking laxatives and water in the morning. DO NOT EAT SOLID FOOD ON THE DAY OF THE PROCEDURE. IF YOU ARE DIABETIC, YOU MAY HAVE APPLE JUICE AT LEAST TWO HOURS BEFORE THE PROCEDURE.

***Can I take my current medications?*** Most medications can be continued as usual, but some medications can interfere with the preparation or the examination. Inform your doctor about medications **Please take all blood pressure medications on the morning of the procedure, unless told otherwise.**

**Weight loss medicatons: if you are taking Ozempic, Mounjaro, Wegovy or similar weight loss/diabetes medication YOU MUST HOLD THESE SPECIFIC MEDICATIONS FOR ONE WEEK BEFORE THE PROCEDURE OR THE PROCEDURE WILL BE CANCELLED. THIS IS VERY IMPORTANT TO UNDERSTAND.**

Insulin: Take half your usual dose the night before and none on the morning of the procedure.

Oral diabetic medications: Do not take any the night before or the morning of the procedures.

Coumadin or Warfarin: Stop 5 days before if your primary care physician or cardiologist approves. Sometimes the Coumadin clinic or your prescribing physician may want you to take a different blood thinner, such as Lovenox, during this time and you should discuss this with your doctor. If you have concerns about stopping Coumadin, please schedule an appointment in our office before your procedure.

Plavix (Clopidogrel): Stop 3 days before ONLY if your cardiologist or neurologist approves. If you have concerns about stopping Plavix, schedule an appointment in our office before the procedure. DO NOT STOP PLAVIX IF YOU HAVE HAD A STENT WITHIN ONE YEAR OR PRIOR STROKE AT ANY TIME.

Xarelto (Rivaroxaban) or Eliquis: Stop 1 day before.

Aspirin: You may continue aspirin. Please let us know if you are on aspirin when you arrive for the procedure.

Iron supplements, herbals, Vitamin E, fish oil, Fiber supplements: Stop 5 days before.

Even if you have to take antibiotics for a dental procedure, they are no longer recommended prior to a colonoscopy,

If you have a history of constipation or hard stools, we suggest an over the counter stool softener, such as Miralax, Glycolax, Colace, Dulcolax, or similar, daily for a week prior to the procedure.

Please bring a list of all of your medications and allergies, and let us know if you are allergic to Latex on the procedure day.

*Colonoscopy Laxative Prep options*:

The America College of Gastroenterology recommends ***split dose regimens*** for superior cleaning and a better quality colonoscopy. This means taking part of the laxatives the night before the procedure and part of the laxatives very early in the morning of the day of the procedure. We strongly recommend split dose.

There are multiple laxative preparations available for cleansing of the colon prior to the procedure. All of these preparations are effective but there are individual variations in how they will work on you and patients and insurances have their own preferences. We have listed several of the most common ones used. You may choose one of these or take the one your doctor suggested. We usually suggest choices 1 to 3. The 4th and 7th choices do not require prescriptions. Several of these should not be taken in patients with significant kidney disease. For patients with advanced heart failure or kidney disease, preparation #3 or #4 are safer.

Also if you have a history of constipation, we suggest an over the counter stool softener such as Miralax, colace, dulcolax, or similar, daily for a week prior to the procedure.

**NAUSEA AND VOMITING ARE POTENTIAL PROBLEMS WITH EVERY PREPARATION. You can try taking this with hard candy, sucking on a lemon, mixing with Gatorade or Crystal Light and/or drinking very slowly to help tolerate the prep and avoid nausea and vomiting.**

***IN ADDITION TO ONE OF THE MAIN PREPS BELOW, PLEASE DO THE FOLLOWING:*** **Please buy and take Miralax powder 238 gram bottle at 5 PM the day before the procedure and mix the powder with 32 oz Gatorade. We have stated the same directions for the preps below. Then, do one of the following:**

***Preparation #1: Suprep (sodium sulfate, potassium sulfate, and magnesium sulfate oral solution)*. Prescription required. This is a split dose regimen. This works well for most patients.**

**Detailed instructions at** [***www.suprepkit.com***](http://www.suprepkit.com)

***Take clear liquids the day before the procedure (See page 3).* No solid food the day before. NAUSEA AND VOMITING ARE POTENTIAL PROBLEMS WITH EVERY PREPARATION. You can try taking this with hard candy, sucking on a lemon, mixing with Gatorade or Crystal Light and/or drinking very slowly to help tolerate the prep and avoid nausea and vomiting.**

*Step 1:* Please buy and take powder Miralax prep 238 gram bottle at 5 PM the day before the procedure mixed with 32 oz Gatorade.

Step 2: The evening before the procedure, at approximately 7 pm, pour one 6 oz bottle of Suprep liquid into the mixing container and add 16 oz of cold water and drink. Drink at least 2 more 16 oz of water or clear liquid over the next hour.

Step 3: **REPEAT Suprep second dose with repeat instructions as Step 2 in the morning, 5 hours before the procedure**

**Preparation #2 Sutab. Prescription required. This may not be covered by insurance**

**Rebate coupons available at https://www.sutab.com/savings. NO solid food the day before.**

1. Take clear liquids only the day before the procedure and drink plenty of fluids.
2. *Step 1:* Please buy and take powder Miralax prep 238 gram bottle at 5 PM the day before the procedure mixed with 32 oz Gatorade.

**1st Dose Sutab:** AT 7 PM, Evening before colonoscopy:

1. Open 1 bottle of 12 tablets and take one tablet every two minutes with 16 oz of water total
2. One hour later, drink at least another 16 oz of water over 30 minutes (The fill line on the container)
3. 30 minutes later, drink another 16 oz of water over 30 minutes (The fill line on the container)

**Second Dose:** On the morning of the procedure, FIVE hours before the procedure time

1. Open second bottle with 12 tablets and take one tablet every two minutes with 16 oz water total.
2. One hour later, drink at least 16 oz of water over 30 minutes
3. 30 minutes later, drink another 16 oz of water over 30 minutes

Please DO NOT drink any water within 2 – 3 hours of your scheduled procedure time.

***Preparation #3: TriLyte/GOLYTELY/Gavilyte/PEG 3350:*  prescription required. You Can use if you have kidney disease.**

Follow this schedule: **No solid food the day before.**

1. **The day before the exam: Drink Clear liquids the entire day. See page 3**
2. NAUSEA AND VOMITING ARE POTENTIAL PROBLEMS WITH EVERY PREPARATION. You can try taking this with hard candy, sucking on a lemon, mixing with Gatorade or **Crystal** Light and/or drinking very slowly to help tolerate the prep and avoid nausea and vomiting
3. *Step 1:* Please buy and take Miralax powder prep 238 gram bottle at 5 PM the day before the procedure mixed with 32 oz Gatorade.
4. Mix the preparation #3 with water. Fill to the “Fill line” or 4-liter mark on the container. You may add a flavor pack of your choice to the solution. Refrigerate after mixing.
5. **Then, between 7 pm and 9 pm, begin drinking the preparation and DRINK THE FIRST TWO LITERS. THE NEXT DAY, DRINK THE REMAINING TWO LITERS FIVE HOURS BEFORE THE SCHEDULED PROCEDURE. DO NOT DRINK ANYTHING WITHIN TWO TO THREE HOURS OF THE PROCEDURE**.

If you start feeling nauseated please stop for one hour, and then try to restart. If you are unable to restart, please follow the secondary prep enclosed in this packet.

Drug interactions: Oral medications taken within one hour of the start of administration of the TriLyte may be flushed from the gastrointestinal tract and not absorbed.

**Recommend:** **After you have mixed the TriLyte/Golytely/Gavilyte you may wish to drink it with ginger ale on ice to help the taste or mix it with Crystal Light**.

**Colonoscopy Prep for patients that cannot finish TriLyte/Golytely/Gavilyte:**

(If you have started the preparation and cannot finish it)

Please go to a pharmacy/grocery store and take the following:

Buy 238 grams Miralax powder three bottles total. Take one bottle at 7PM and repeat one bottle at 9 PM mixed with 32 oz Gatorade.

**Take one more bottle of 238 grams Miralax powder mixed with Gatorade 5 hours before the procedure.**

NAUSEA AND VOMITING ARE POTENTIAL PROBLEMS WITH EVERY PREPARATION. You can try taking this with hard candy, sucking on a lemon, mixing with Gatorade, and/or drinking very slowly to help tolerate the prep and avoid nausea and vomiting

***Preparation #4: Miralax*, does not require prescription, (238 gm. bottle buy three bottles of Miralax powder and three bottles of Gatorade (32 oz each) NOT FDA approved for colonoscopy preparation but some patients request this. WE BELIEVE THAT THIS PREPARATION IS THE LEAST EFFECTIVE PREPARATION AND TAKES LONGER TO WORK.**

1. **Take clear liquids the day before the procedure. See page 3. No solid food the day before.**

2. 3 PM: Take 2 DULCOLAX tablets

3. 4 PM: Mix the first bottle of MIRALAX powder (238 gram bottle) into the 32 ounces of GATORADE. (Put the bottle of Miralax in each 32 ounce bottle). Shake the solution until fully dissolved. Drink an 8 ounce glass every 20 minutes until the solution is gone.

4. 7 PM: Mix another bottle of MIRALAX with one bottle of GATORADE 32 oz each and finish it.

5. 5 hours before the procedure, take another 238 grams of Miralax mixed with 32 oz Gatorade but please finish at least 3 hours before the procedure.

***Preparation #5: Suflave*. Prescription required. This is a split dose regimen. This works well for most patients and maybe better tolerated.**

**Detailed instructions and savings coupons available at** [***www.suflave.com***](http://www.suflave.com)

***Take clear liquids the day before the procedure (See page 3).* No solid food the day before. NAUSEA AND VOMITING ARE POTENTIAL PROBLEMS WITH EVERY PREPARATION. You can try taking this with hard candy, sucking on a lemon, mixing with Gatorade or Crystal Light and/or drinking very slowly to help tolerate the prep and avoid nausea and vomiting.**

*Step 1:* Please buy and take Miralax powder prep 238 gram bottle at 5 PM the day before the procedure mixed with 32 oz Gatorade.

Step 2: The evening before the procedure, at approximately 7 pm, pour one flavoring packet into the Suflave bottle and add water to the fill line, recap, and gently shake. Drink 8 oz of solution every 15 minutes until empty. Drink 16 oz of water afterwards.

Step 3: **Take Suflave second dose with repeat instructions as Step 2, 5 hours before the procedure.**

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***Preparation #6: Clenpiq* Prescription required. Do not take if you have kidney disease. PLEASE TAKE HALF THE PREP THE NIGHT BEFORE, AND HALF THE PREP 5 HOURS BEFORE THE PROCEDURE.**

**Detailed instructions, videos, and discount coupons at** [***www.CLENPIQ.com***](http://www.CLENPIQ.com)

**Take plenty of clear liquids the day before the procedure (See page 3). No solid food the day before.**

*Step 1:* Please buy and take Miralax powder prep 238 gram bottle at 5 PM the day before the procedure mixed with 32 oz Gatorade.

**1st dose of Clenpiq** at 7 PM the evening before the procedure

Step 1: Take one bottle by mouth

Step 2: Drink at least 5 cups of clear liquids (about 8 ounces each cup) over the next 4 hours

**2nd dose** is taken early morning of the day of the procedure, 5 hours before the procedure time

Step 1: Take second bottle by mouth

Step 2: Drink at least 3 cups of clear liquids (about 8 ounces each cup) over the next three hours

Step 3: Nothing by mouth within two hours of the procedure

***Preparation #7: Magnesium Citrate (Not FDA approved for colonoscopy preparation but some patients request this), No prescription required, do not take if you have kidney disease.***

These bottles can be obtained over the counter from any pharmacy or grocery store. **NAUSEA AND VOMITING ARE POTENTIAL PROBLEMS WITH EVERY PREPARATION. You can try taking this with hard candy, sucking on a lemon, mixing with Gatorade or Crystal Light and/or drinking very slowly to help tolerate the prep and avoid nausea and vomiting**

1. Clear Liquids the day before the examination. (See Page 3). No solid food the day before**.**

2. Drink 1 bottle of magnesium citrate 10 oz each at 4pm, 6 pm and at 8 pm the day before the examination. You may mix with Ginger Ale/Sprite and keep chilled for improved taste. Try to avoid red magnesium citrate.

3. Take one 10 oz bottle of magnesium citrate 5 hours before the exam on the day of the procedure.

NAUSEA AND VOMITING ARE POTENTIAL PROBLEMS WITH EVERY PREPARATION. You can try taking this with hard candy, sucking on a lemon, mixing with Crystal Light, and/or drinking very slowly to help tolerate the prep and avoid nausea and vomiting.