

Endoscopy Unit

Preparation for a colonoscopy examination

So that we can get a clear picture during the examination your bowel must be completely empty. Please follow the instructions below carefully. When you have completed the preparation all that will remain in your bowel will be clear to yellow or greenish fluid.

One Week before your examination

If you are taking stool bulking agents such as Fybrogel or Regular stop taking them. If you are taking Iron tablets please stop taking them.

Two days before your examination

Eat a light diet avoiding cereals, wholemeal bread, salads, fruits, or any food containing fibre, nuts or seeds. Please remove the skins from vegetables including tomatoes. Continue to drink normally and take your normal medication. (Please see overleaf for a suggested meal plan)

The day before your examination

You may have a light breakfast only (tea and white toast). After this drink only clear fluids such as glucose drinks, bovril, black tea or coffee (**no milk**), lemonade, water or orange squash, jelly and clear soup. **You should drink at least 2 to 3 litres of fluid during the day before your examination.**

At 4pm on the day before your examination

Drink one sachet of Picolax (mix with a glass of water). The drink will fizz and may feel hot so wait for a minute or two to cool before drinking. Drink a full glass of water after drinking the Picolax. **Remember to drink lots of fluid.**

At 6am on the day of your examination

Drink the second sachet of Picolax at 6am. (If your appointment is scheduled for the afternoon, you may wish to take this between 8am and 9am). Then drink a glass of water. You can drink clear fluids up until 2 hours before your appointment time.

Early morning appointments

If you have an early morning appointment and are concerned about travelling following the bowel preparation, you may take your first sachet of Picolax at 12pm and the second sachet at 6pm the day before. Please remember to drink plenty of clear fluids.

Warning: Picolax can start working within as little as 30 minutes but may take up to 2 to 3 hours to work so stay within reach of the toilet. It would be best if someone can be with you from the afternoon you start the preparation.

IMPORTANT

No alcohol should be drunk the day before or the day after your examination.

Medication: You can take your medicines at the usual time. However, if you are taking anti-blood clotting medicines such as Warfarin or Clopidogrel, please let us know as soon as possible on 020 8725 1563/0771.

Dietary preparation for colonoscopy examination

Any problems with any of these instructions please call the Endoscopy Unit.

Telephone: 020 8725 1563 / 1491

Two days before your examination it is important to reduce the amount of fibre you eat. This means avoiding cereals, wholemeal bread, salads, fruits, or any food containing fibre, nuts or seeds.

You may find the suggested meal plan below helpful in planning your meals.

Breakfast

Fruit juice.

Rice Krispies, Cornflakes, Sugar Puffs, porridge and milk.

White bread and butter / seedless jam / honey / shredless marmalade / marmite.

Light Meal

Lean meat, egg, cheese or fish.

White bread and butter.

Plain sponge cake / jelly and ice cream.

Main Meal

Fruit juice or clear soup and white bread roll.

Lean meat, chicken or fish in sauce or gravy, peeled potato, white rice or pasta.

Milk pudding or yoghurt.

Supper

Plain biscuits / plain crackers.

Cheese.

Milk or plain chocolate.

Milky drink.

Advice for diabetic patients

The necessary change in your diet may upset your diabetes. However, do not worry as this will not do you any long term harm. You may on the days leading up to your colonoscopy be at risk of having a 'hypo' (too low blood sugar). On the day of clear fluids only, you should take sweet drinks every 2-3 hours during the day to avoid this problem.

Day before the examination

Take your medication as usual and supplement your fluid intake with glucose containing drinks such as Lucozade (55mls), Ribena (15mls), Lemonade (200mls), Coke (100mls), squash/barley water (35mls) or added sugar to your tea and coffee (2 tsp). Monitor your blood sugar level regularly.

If you have any questions about controlling your diabetes whilst taking your preparation, please contact your diabetes care team.

On the day of the procedure

If you are on insulin:

If you have a morning appointment, do not take your normal morning dose but bring this with you so you may have it immediately after the procedure.

If you have an afternoon appointment, reduce your insulin. You may have to halve the dose (but check with your diabetes care team). Bring your insulin and some food with you.

If you take tablets for your diabetes

Do not take your tablets on the morning of the examination. Take your tablets with some food after the examination.