

# Getting Ready for Your Colonoscopy

Inside, you will find:

- Instructions on how to prepare
- More information about your colonoscopy
- Answers to commonly asked questions

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>> Help us Help You! <<

If you follow these instructions, then you'll give your doctor the best chance of doing this right the first time. That way you won't need to repeat the test.

## About this Booklet

- You've been scheduled for a colonoscopy. **Colonoscopy can find cancer and can save lives.** This booklet will help you get ready.
- We know it can be challenging to get ready for a colonoscopy. We also know that you may have many questions about the test. We created this booklet to help answer your questions.
- After you read this booklet, go to page 19 and **complete the checklist** as you prepare for your procedure.

## About this Booklet

- **One out of every 16 Americans will get colon cancer.**
- If colon cancer is found early, then most people live. If colon cancer is found late, then only 5% of people will live.

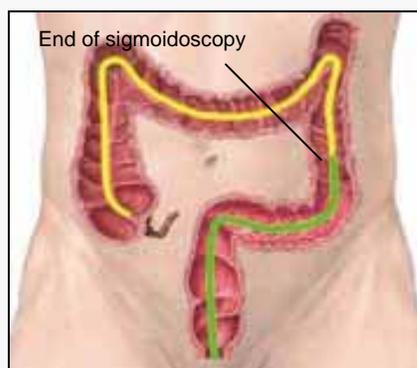
## About Getting Ready

- The MOST IMPORTANT thing you can do is to **empty out your colon by carefully following the diet described in this booklet.**
- By now you have received "bowel prep" medicine. If you have not, or have any questions call this number: **610-431-3122.**
- We want to help you get ready. If you come in with your colon properly emptied out, then you're off to a good start.

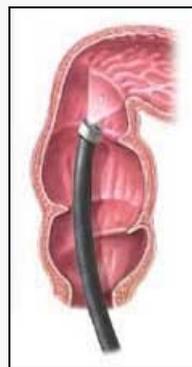
## How does a colonoscopy work?

- The purpose of a colonoscopy is to look inside your large intestine (colon) for polyps, cancers, ulcers, and other conditions.
- Just before the procedure starts, you will receive some medicine to make you sleepy.
- Most people do not remember having the procedure.
- The doctor will pass a flexible tube from below. The tube has a small camera and a headlight which allow the doctor to see the inside of your colon on a TV monitor.
- The doctor can take biopsies of abnormal areas, and can also remove polyps. You will wake up shortly after the test is over.

Here is a picture of how it works. The scope bends as it passes through the colon. The headlight provides light so the doctor can see. The scope is passed through the whole colon. It goes farther than a sigmoidoscopy, which only looks at half the colon.



A sigmoidoscopy only examines the lower third of the colon; colonoscopy examines the entire length.



The end of the type of scope used for colonoscopies.

### Why is it Important to Get Clean on the Inside?

Your doctor must be able to see in order to do the test right. If it is dirty on the inside, then your doctor may not see important things, like polyps or cancer, and may even have to do the test again. That would mean you would have to start over, and nobody wants to do that.

### Imagine This:

Think of a clean or dirty colon this way:



When your colon is clean, doing the colonoscopy is like driving on a country road on a sunny day. It is easy to see and easy to drive.



When your colon is dirty, doing the colonoscopy is like driving on a winter road in a snow storm. It is hard to see and hard to drive.

# ONE DAY BEFORE Your Colonoscopy

## What you Eat

- You must not eat any solid food the day before your colonoscopy. You may only eat a clear liquid diet. Go to [page 10](#) for things you can eat.

## What you Drink

- You must drink only clear liquids for breakfast, lunch and dinner.
- Be sure to drink at least 12 tall glasses (at least 8-10 ounces each) of clear liquids throughout the day in addition to what is instructed for your bowel prep.

## Taking your "Prep"

- You should already have your "bowel prep" medicine. If not, call: **610-431-3122**.
- The instructions for your prep are with your information packet. You will start taking the prep the evening before your test. Follow the directions carefully.
- It does not matter if you are short or tall, big or small; ALL HUMANS have the same colon length. Therefore it is essential that you follow the bowel prep instructions provided by your Physician.
- How do you know if your prep is working? Go to [page 14](#) to find out.

## One Day Before Your Colonoscopy

Time of Day	What you Eat	What you Drink
<b>Morning</b> 	Clear liquid diet for breakfast. <u>No solid food</u> . 	Drink at least <u>4 tall glasses</u> of clear liquids. 
<b>Afternoon</b> 	Clear liquid diet for lunch. <u>No solid food</u> . 	Drink at least <u>4 tall glasses</u> of clear liquids. 
<b>Evening</b> 	Clear liquid diet for dinner. <u>No solid food</u> . Take prep medicine as directed.  	Drink at least <u>4 tall glasses</u> of clear liquids. 

# DAY OF Your Colonoscopy

## What you Eat

- You must not eat any solid foods prior to your colonoscopy, even if your colonoscopy is scheduled for the afternoon.
- You can eat a regular diet once you are fully awake after the test is over.

## What you Drink

- If your procedure is scheduled in the morning, then take nothing by mouth until after your procedure, except for approved medications.
- If your procedure is scheduled in the afternoon, then you may drink only clear liquids until 4 hours prior to your arrival time.
- You may take medication(s) as instructed with 4 ounces of water.

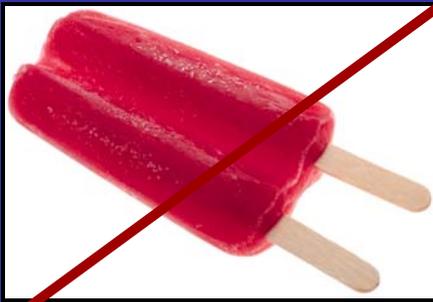
## Day of Your Colonoscopy

Time of Day	What you Eat	What you Drink
<p>Morning</p> 	<p><u>Morning procedures</u> Do <b>NOT</b> eat or drink anything prior to your colonoscopy.</p> 	<p><u>Afternoon procedures</u> Clear liquid diet for breakfast. No solid food.</p> <p>Report for your scheduled colonoscopy</p>
<p>Afternoon</p> 	<p>Regular meal <u>after</u> colonoscopy is done</p> 	<p><b>YOU'RE DONE!</b> No more restrictions on what you drink</p>
<p>Evening</p> 	<p><b>YOU'RE DONE!</b> <u>Regular meal</u> for dinner.</p> 	<p><b>YOU'RE DONE!</b> No more restrictions on what you drink</p>

# Red & Purple Foods are NOT OK to Eat!



Red and Purple Colored Beverages - Not OK



Red and Purple Colored Popsicles - Not OK

Red Colored Gelatins - Not OK



Red and Purple Colored Candy - Not OK

## What other Foods are NOT OK to Eat?



No fruits - Not OK



No vegetables - Not OK



No soups with vegetables,  
noodles, rice, meat or  
other chunks of food -  
Not OK



No milk and dairy  
products - Not OK



No breads, grains, rice,  
cereals - Not OK



No meats - Not OK

## What Foods are OK to Eat?



Clear broth - OK



Popsicles - OK



Clear Hard Candy - OK



Flavored Gelatin - OK



Honey - OK



Lemon Juice -  
OK



Sugar - OK

## What Drinks are OK?



Water and mineral water - OK



Soda pop, coke, ginger ale, and club soda - OK



Apple juice - OK



Tea - OK



Black coffee - OK



Clear sports drink (like Propel® Fitness Water or Clear Gatorade®) - OK

## What Drinks are NOT OK?



No orange juice - Not OK



No pineapple juice -  
Not OK



No milk - Not OK



No coffee with cream  
- Not OK



No milkshakes - Not OK

>>What about Alcohol?<<  
Although alcohol is a clear liquid,  
it can make you dehydrated. You  
should NOT drink alcohol during  
the preparation for your test.

## What is a "Clear Liquid"?

- As you get ready for your colonoscopy, you must only drink clear liquids.
- A liquid is "clear" if you can read something through it. Use this simple test to figure out what you can drink, and what you cannot drink.



This is orange juice. It's not clear, because you can't read newspaper print through it. Don't drink this.



This is pineapple juice. It's also not clear. Don't drink this.



This is apple juice. You can read newspaper print right through it. You can drink this.

## How Do You Know When Your Prep Is Working?

- The stool coming out should look like the stuff you are eating and drinking - clear and without many particles.
- You know you're done when the stool coming out is yellow, light, liquid and clear - like urine.

### Here's a Guide:



## Answers to Common Questions

### Can I drive myself home after my colonoscopy?

- **NO.** You will receive medication to make you sleepy during the test. That means you cannot drive home. You must arrange for someone to drive you home after the test.
- You may use public transportation (taxi or bus), but only if you have an adult escort.
- Should you not be able to secure a ride, we have the names of transportation services that you may contact for a ride. Please call (610) 431-3122 for that information.

### How long will the test take?

- The test itself usually takes 10-30 minutes. But expect to spend 2½ hours at the Surgery Center to have the test and to recover from any sleeping medicine.

### What if I take blood pressure medicines?

- If you take blood pressure medicine, be sure to still use the medicine while preparing for the test. On the day of your test you should take your blood pressure medicine with 4 ounces of water before 6:00 AM for a morning procedure.
- If your blood pressure medicine contains a diuretic follow the instruction provided to you by your Physician.

### What if I take Aspirin, Coumadin, Plavix, or Diabetic Medication?

- If you take Aspirin, Coumadin, Plavix, or Diabetic Medication follow the instructions provided to you by your Physician.

### How do I know when my bowel prep is complete?

- You know your bowel prep is complete when your stool becomes clear and yellow, as described on page 14. If your stool becomes clear before completion of your prep, please continue taking your full prep as instructed.

## Answers to Common Questions (continued)

### My prep hasn't started working yet. Is that OK?

- People respond differently to the bowel prep - some people start having diarrhea within minutes of taking the prep, while others have no response for an hour or more.
- If you have waited more than 3 hours without a response, then it may not be working well. Be sure you are drinking enough fluid, as instructed on page 6. If that doesn't work, take the second part of your prep and continue to drink fluids.
- If the prep still has not worked after 4 hours, call the on-call doctor at 610-431-3122 for further instructions.
- Multiple bowel movements will occur and may continue for several hours after you have finished drinking the solution. Your stools should become clear of solid matter.

### What are the side effects of the "bowel prep"?

- You will have lots of diarrhea from the bowel prep. This will start anywhere between a **few minutes to 3 hours after you start the prep**. You will spend a lot of time on the toilet once you start taking the prep. So plan to be home, and plan to be near a toilet.
- Most people have bloating and abdominal discomfort. This is normal. Do not be alarmed if you feel these symptoms.
- Many people have nausea. This is normal. However, if you are severely nauseous take a 1 hour break then resume drinking the remainder of the bowel prep.
- Some people do not like the taste or smell of the medicine. Please do not let this get in the way of taking the medicine as directed.
- Rarely, some people throw up while taking the prep. If this happens, stop taking the prep and call the on-call doctor at 610-431-3122.

## Colonoscopy Prep Facts

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- It is important to drink plenty of water and other CLEAR LIQUIDS throughout the day in order to avoid dehydration and to flush the bowel. You are to remain on CLEAR LIQUIDS up to midnight; after midnight take nothing by mouth until after your procedure. If you are scheduled for an afternoon procedure you may have Clear Liquids until 4 hours prior to your arrival time.
- Tucks/baby wipes and Charmin Plus® toilet tissue may help with irritation after the numerous bowel movements.
- You will receive a phone call from Professional Anesthesia Consultants. They will provide the Anesthesia services on the day of your procedure. If you have any concerns about the sedation please call them at 610-254-9500. If they cannot reach you, the Anesthesiologist will speak to you the day of your procedure.
- Two business days prior to your procedure we will call you with the arrival time for your procedure; you do not have to arrive any earlier than the time that is given.
- Should you not receive this call please call 610-431-3122 prior to starting your prep.
- If you reschedule your procedure, check to see if you need new prep instructions.
- Please bring your Allergy and Medication Lists with you on the day of the procedure.
- Please bring your insurance card and a photo ID on the day of the procedure.
- Please check with your insurance company to see if you need a referral.

## What if I have other questions?

If you are having any trouble preparing for your test, or have questions about symptoms or medications, you may call this number between the hours of 7:30 AM - 3:30 PM, Monday through Friday: (484) 356-1050 (Nurse's Line). Leave a message if there is no response then you will be called back. If you call after hours, then you will be called back the next day.

On the day of your colonoscopy, report to the

West Chester Endoscopy Suite

915 Old Fern Hill Road

Building B, Suite 300

West Chester, PA 19380

Telephone: (610) 431-3122

## Colonoscopy Checklist

Here's a checklist of things to do as you prepare for your colonoscopy. As you do each one, check it off the list by marking and "X" in each box. Make sure each box has been checked prior to coming in for your procedure.

### Before you Start

- Read the booklet carefully.
- Make sure you have your bowel prep kit. If not, call this number: 610-431-3122.

### One Day Before your Colonoscopy

- Eat breakfast - clear liquids only, no solid foods.
- Eat lunch - clear liquids only, no solid foods.
- Eat dinner - clear liquids only, no solid foods.
- Take bowel prep in afternoon/evening as instructed.
- Drink at least 12 tall glasses of clear liquids throughout the day.

### Day of your Colonoscopy

- Report for your colonoscopy in the West Chester Endoscopy Suite, 915 Old Fern Hill Road, Building B, Suite 300, West Chester, PA 19380.