

# How to prepare for your colonoscopy

## Patient Information

To have a successful examination of your bowel and to avoid you having to come back again, your bowel must be as empty and clean as possible. **If these instructions are not followed your test may be cancelled or need repeating.**

You must follow the low residue diet set out in this leaflet and take the Senna laxatives and both sachets of Picolax. **You may need to have a blood test prior to starting the prep.** This will be discussed with you by the pre-assessment nurse.

There is a small risk of developing dehydration, low blood pressure or kidney problems with this medication and the doctor prescribing the oral bowel cleansing agent will have assessed your risk for bowel preparation. It is important that you maintain a good fluid intake whilst taking the bowel preparation and if this is not possible then you should seek medical advice. The symptoms of dehydration include headaches, dizziness or light headedness (particularly on standing), thirst, or a reduced urine output. It is essential that you read section 4 on the Picolax leaflet regarding any other side effects and follow any advice accordingly.

### 7 days before your appointment ...

Stop taking any medications that contain iron e.g. Ferrous Sulphate, Fumarate or Sanatogen.

### 4 days before your appointment ...

Stop taking any medications that may cause you to become constipated, for example Lomotil, Loperamide, Imodium® or Codeine Phosphate, but continue to take all your usual medications unless told otherwise.

### 3 days before your appointment ...

**You must drink plenty of fluids over the 3 day preparation period.** If you can do this your bowel will be empty and clean and ready for your colonoscopy examination. Please avoid using 'non-steroidal anti inflammatory drugs' e.g. Ibuprofen, Diclofenac, from today until after the colonoscopy. You may have been asked to stop certain medications from today. The pre-assessment nurse will confirm these with you.

**Medications to stop:** .....

**Endoscopy contact numbers:**

**The James Cook University Hospital – 01642 282576**

**Friarage Hospital – 01609 763276**

## 2 days before your appointment ...

### Start diet instructions

If you are taking Fybogel or any other fibre products stop taking them now. The fibre content of these products will work against the special diet you are about to take. Start your diet at breakfast. Eat freely from the foods and drink fluids only on the diet list (see overleaf) unless you are allergic to, or have been advised to avoid, certain foods.

**At 10pm - Take the four Senna tablets provided.**

## The day before your appointment ...

**Continue to follow the instructions given above and only eat and drink from the list below.** You may have been asked to stop certain medications today. The pre-assessment nurse will confirm these with you.

**Medications to stop: .....**

**From 1pm - No more food to be eaten after this time until after your colonoscopy. Drink a variety of fluids from the list - some salty, some with sugar.**

**At 6pm - Dissolve the first sachet of Picolax in a large glass of water. Stir well. If it becomes hot wait until it cools sufficiently to drink.**

Make sure you are within easy reach of a toilet once you have taken the Picolax. Be prepared to have your bowels opened several times during the course of the preparation. You may have some bowel cramping discomfort this is normal although if there is prolonged abdominal pain, medical advice should be sought.

**Please continue to drink plenty of fluids from the diet list provided throughout the day and evening, to avoid dehydration.**

## The day of your appointment ...

**4 hours before your appointment (this may be as early as 4am) -**

**Dissolve the second sachet of Picolax as above and drink all this mixture even if you have had your bowels opened several times. There is evidence that taking the second dose of the bowel preparation not more than 4 hours before your colonoscopy appointment significantly improves the chances of finding polyps that may cause bowel cancer.**

**Continue to drink plenty of fluids as listed in the diet list.**

**No food should be eaten until after your colonoscopy. You must drink clear fluids up until 2 hours before your admission time. This should be a variety of appropriate fluids and not just water.**

Author: Endoscopy

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The James Cook University Hospital,  
Marton Road, Middlesbrough, TS4 3BW.  
Switchboard telephone: 01642 850850

Friarage Hospital, Bullamoor Rd,  
Northallerton, North Yorkshire, DL6 1JG.  
Switchboard telephone: 01609 779911

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# Diet List - Colonoscopy

Do not eat any foods or have any drinks that are not on the list.

## **MILK:**

No milk in any form as this causes a residual coating and could limit views in the bowel.

**Meat:** Lean meat e.g., chicken, turkey, beef, ham, rabbit, tofu and Quorn

**Fish:** White fish only (not fried)

**Eggs:** Boiled, poached or scrambled (no milk to be added).

**Vegetables:** Potatoes boiled or mashed only (no milk to be added)

**Cereals:** White rice and pasta, boiled only (no wholemeal varieties)

**Bread:** White bread only

**Drinks:** Black tea or coffee, fruit squash (not freshly squeezed or with barley), Lucozade or non-diet drinks, Marmite, Oxo, Bovril as well as lots of water.

**Fats:** A daily allowance of 25g / 1oz of butter or margarine

**Other:** Plain jelly, rich tea biscuits, honey, golden syrup, sweeteners and salt

## **NOTE:**

Patients taking the oral contraceptive pill should take alternative precautions during the week following the oral bowel cleansing agent.

Any patient who is Diabetic may need further instructions – please check with the pre-assessment nurse.

If you experience problems, advice from a healthcare professional is available within office hours at your GP surgery or from the Endoscopy units.

Out of hours advice from your on-call GP.

For in-hours if having your procedure at **The James Cook University Hospital** please contact them on **01642 854845**

If you are having your procedure at the **Friarage Hospital** please contact them on **01609 764853**

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