

What Do I Need to Know About Bowel Prep?

What is bowel prep?

Bowel prep clears all food and waste from the bowel. A very important part of a colonoscopy is being able to see inside the large intestine. If food and waste are in the large intestine, the doctor will not be able to see clearly.



Questions to ask your Health Care Provider:

Some ways to clean the bowel:

- Enemas
- Suppositories
- Polyethylene Glycol (PEG) Electrolyte Solutions
- Sodium Phosphates Solutions.

Find out what is best for you .

Other questions to ask your health care provider:

- How does bowel prep work?
- Can I take my medicines during bowel prep?
- When should I start my bowel prep?
- How will I know when my bowel is clear?
- Are there any risks with bowel prep?

<u>Enemas</u> A liquid pumped into the rectum.	<u>Suppositories</u> A small piece of medicine inserted into the rectum.
<u>Polyethylene Glycol (PEG) Electrolyte Solutions</u> A solution which you drink to clear the bowel.	<u>Sodium Phosphates Solutions</u> Tablets taken by mouth to soften solids in the bowel .



Before Your Test:

One week before your test:

- Do not take aspirin products or iron tablets.
- Do not take fiber supplements like Metamucil or Citrucel.
- Do not eat popcorn or any corn.
- Get bowel prep from a pharmacy or at the health care provider's office.
- Buy clear liquids. Do not use carbonated beverages like soda pop.
- Arrange to have an adult drive you to and from your test.

Remember to drink plenty of liquids! It is important to stay hydrated.

The day before your test:

- Drink only clear liquids. Do not eat any solid food or milk products until your test is done.
- You may need to get to the toilet right away. You will have many bowel movements through the day. They will become very watery. The bowels are clear or clean when there is only pale yellow fluid without flecks of stool.
- You may have to take a laxative or an enema the night before the colonoscopy if the bowel is not all cleaned out.

Clear liquids:

- Water
 - Strained fruit juices (no pulp)
 - Popsicles
 - Ice
 - Gatorade-not red or purple
 - Clear broth or bouillon
 - Jello-not red or purple
 - Kool Aid
 - Coffee or tea (no milk or cream)
- ** Do not drink red or purple-colored liquids

Remember, NOTHING to eat or drink after midnight.

The morning of the colonoscopy:

- **Do not eat or drink anything!**
- If you take morning medicines, take with small sips of water only.
- You may need to be there 1 hour before your test.
- The test and recovery time take 2-4 hours.

Bowel Prep Tips:

- You will need a ride home after the test.
- Stop aspirin 5 days before the test.
- If on Coumadin, or if you have diabetes, please talk with your health care provider about what you should do.
- If on arthritis medication or any new medications, check with your health care provider about what you should do.
- You will be using the restroom a lot during bowel prep. Use adult wet wipes or a water spray to clean off after using the restroom to help prevent tenderness or irritation.
- Drink a lot of clear liquids. You need to stay hydrated.
- Follow the doctor's instructions. You don't want to have to do the prep all over again because you didn't get it right the first time.
- Call the doctor's office for help if you have any trouble or don't understand the prep directions.

For questions, please call the Utah Cancer Action Network (1-888-222-2542)

Resources:

<http://digestive.niddk.nih.gov/ddiseases/pubs/colonoscopy/#preparation>
http://www.healthinfotranslations.com/pdfDocs/Miralax_Ducolax_Bowel_Prep_Som_FINAL.pdf

