

COLONOSCOPY: How to Properly Prepare for the Exam General Lavage Prep

Thorough bowel preparation is extremely important for obtaining a good examination. If formed stool remains in the colon, the entire test may have to be repeated at a later time. If you are chronically constipated ie., move your bowels less than three times per week, you will need extra prep. Please call our office as soon as possible for further instructions.

Otherwise, please follow the enclosed instructions **carefully**:

1. **Lavage Bowel Preparation:** Enclosed you will find a prescription for a lavage electrolyte solution bearing one of these names: GoLytely, NuLytely or Colyte. Please take this prescription to your pharmacy to have it filled. Follow the instructions on the bottle closely, preparing the solution with tap water the morning 24 hours before your scheduled colonoscopy. After the solution is mixed properly, store it in the refrigerator.
2. **Iron supplements** must be stopped at least four days prior to the exam.
3. Current guidelines no longer require that you hold daily aspirin, or chronic arthritis pain medicines (eg. non-steroidals such as Ibuprofen, Advil, Motrin, Aleve, etc.) prior to your procedure.
4. **Blood thinners** (example: Coumadin, Heparin, Lovenox, or Fragmin) are important to discuss prior to having the colonoscopy performed. If you are on any of these medications, please **call our office** as soon as you receive this letter.
5. **MAO Inhibitors.** Parnate (tranylcypromine), Nardil (phenelzine), Eldepryl (selegiline), Marplan (isocarboxazid) or Azilect (rasagiline). If you take any of these medicines, please call our office as soon as you receive this letter.
6. Avoid all fruit “skins” and vegetables, whole grain products, (example: beans, corn, celery, broccoli, brown rice, etc.) and seeds or nuts (sesame, poppy, almonds, cashews, etc.) for two days prior to the exam.
7. **Diet:** Between 4:00-5:00 PM on the evening prior to your colonoscopy, have a clear liquid supper only. Generally liquids that you can see through are “clear.” For example: soup broth, gelatin dessert, tea, ginger ale, and apple juice (avoid coffee, red or purple jello).
8. Take 3 Dulcolax (bisacodyl 5 mg) tablets orally **at 5:00 PM** before starting the GoLytely. These can be purchased over the counter at your pharmacy.
9. **Drinking GoLytely, (NuLytely or Colyte)** should begin between 5:00-6:00 PM. It usually takes 3-4 hours to drink the 4 liters. Drink 8 oz. every 10 minutes until all the liquid is consumed. If you begin to feel nauseated, uncomfortably full or if you vomit, take a 20-30 minute break (this may occur in a small percentage of patients). Resume drinking 8 oz. again every 10-15 minutes. If vomiting recurs after resuming GoLytely (NuLytely or Colyte), call our office.

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10. **The day of your procedure**, you may have **clear** liquids to keep hydrated up to two (2) hours prior to your scheduled procedure, then nothing by mouth. If you are taking **heart, seizure, or blood pressure medications**, be sure to **take these medications as early as possible on the day of the test with a small sip of water**.
11. Your colonoscopy should be deferred for the following reasons:
 - if you are **pregnant** or think you might be
 - if you have suffered a **heart attack** in the last six weeks
 - if you have had **diverticulitis** in the last month
12. If you have an implantable heart **defibrillator**, please notify our office when you receive this letter.
13. **Antibiotics before procedures:** According to the new 2007 American Heart Association Guidelines, antibiotic prophylaxis is no longer recommended for **any** patient with heart disease (valvular or other) undergoing **any** GI procedure.

Since this is a marked change from prior recommendations, some physicians may still choose to use antibiotics for certain cardiac patients. Please check with your PCP or cardiologist if you are in doubt. **Notify** us as soon as possible if your physician still advises you to have antibiotics pre-procedure.

14. **Diabetics** that take **insulin** should generally take one-half of their usual nighttime dose the night before the colonoscopy and one-half their usual morning dose the morning of the colonoscopy procedure.

Diabetics that take **oral medications** such as **DiaBeta, Diabinese, Glucotrol, Glynase, or Micronase** should not take this medication the night before (if taking twice a day) or the morning of colonoscopy. You should wait to take the morning dose of medication until after the colonoscopy is performed and your usual diet is resumed.

15. **It is best not to make long distance travel plans for 14 days** following your procedure. This is necessary for you to have immediate access to the physician following your procedure in the unlikely event that complications may occur.

If you have any questions about your medication, please call our office.