

# Preparing for Your Colonoscopy

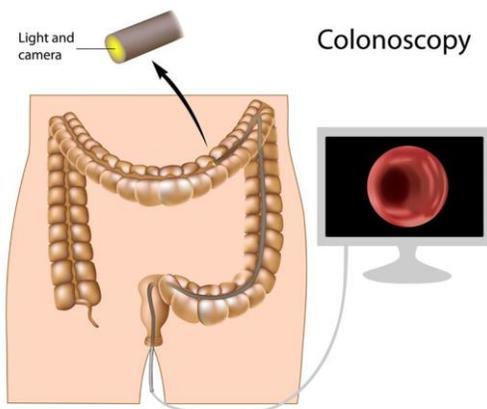
You have been scheduled for a colonoscopy. This information will help you get ready. Follow the instructions on this page (both front and back sides).

The most important thing you can do to prepare for your colonoscopy is to follow the instructions for cleaning your colon (bowel). This is often called bowel preparation, or “prep”.

## What is a colonoscopy?

A **colonoscopy** is a test to look at your colon. The test will help find problems such as growths (polyps), tumours, redness (inflammation), and areas of bleeding.

You will be given medicine to help you relax (a sedative) before and during the colonoscopy. During the colonoscopy, a tube with a camera on the end is put through the rectum and into the colon. Pictures are sent to a computer screen. Your doctor will look for anything that is not normal.



## How do I prepare for my colonoscopy?

You **must** do all of the following things before your colonoscopy:

- ✓ **Follow the bowel preparation instructions (see instructions on other side)**. Plan ahead and make sure you get the PICO-SALAX medicine at least 2 days before the test. The PICO-SALAX medicine is a powder that must be mixed with water before you drink it.
- ✓ Ask a staff member at the Endoscopy Procedure Suite if you need to **change or stop** any of your regular medications, especially if you take blood thinners, iron medications, or diabetes medication.
- ✓ Make plans for someone to drive you home and check on you after the procedure. **Do not drive for 24 hours** after the test. An adult must stay with you and check on you often for at least 12 hours after the test. The test will not be done with sedation unless you have an adult to drive you home and stay with you.

## Why is it important to follow the bowel preparation instructions?

Your bowel must be clean so that your doctor can properly see your colon. If your bowel is not properly cleansed, the doctor may not be able to see problems in your colon (like polyps or cancer) and you may have to do the test again.

# Bowel Preparation Instructions

**Bowel Preparation includes changing your diet and taking the medicine called PICO-SALAX. PICO SALAX needs to be mixed with water to make it into a liquid.**

**The PICO-SALAX causes severe watery diarrhea, which empties your colon. It is important that you follow these instructions.**

**5 days before your colonoscopy**      **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_ (you can fill in the date)

- Stop eating any foods that have seeds, such as grapes, berries, cucumbers, sesame seeds, poppy seeds, and figs. **Do not follow the bowel prep container or package instructions for eating and drinking.**
- Stop eating corn or popcorn

**2 nights before your colonoscopy**      **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_ (you can fill in the date)

- Take a laxative (medication that prevents constipation) of your choice. Constipation is when you have less than 3 bowel movements (poo) a week.

**The day before your colonoscopy**      **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_ (you can fill in the date)

## 1. Drink only clear fluids

- **Do not** have any solid food or milk products.
- **Drink** at least 2 liters of clear fluids, such as: fruit juice (no pulp), water, soft drinks, Gatorade, clear broth, Jell-O, popsicles, coffee or tea with no milk (you may add sugar).
- **Do not** drink only water. Electrolyte containing drinks, such as Gatorade, are ideal.
- **Do not** drink any liquids that are **red** in colour.

## 2. Drink the first half of the PICO-SALAX

- Mix 1 package of PICO-SALAX with 150 mL (5 ounces) cold water and stir until completely dissolved.
- **At 7:00 pm the evening before your test**, drink the contents of the first package of PICO-SALAX.

**The PICO-SALAX will cause severe watery diarrhea. Stay close to a toilet.**

**The day of the colonoscopy**      **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_ (you can fill in the date)

## 1. Drink the second half of the PICO-SALAX

- **4 hours before you leave for the hospital**, mix and drink the second package of PICO-SALAX. This may mean you have to wake up very early, but it will lead to a clean bowel and an easier and more effective test.
- Drink only clear fluids up until 2 hours before the colonoscopy appointment time, then do not drink anything until after the test is over.

**If you are unable to finish the PICO-SALAX during this time, continue to drink the rest as quickly as you can. If you cannot finish it, bring any remaining PICO-SALAX solution to your appointment on the day of your test.**

Partners