

# Two-day patient preparation before CT colonography – Omnipaque™ and Picolax™

(Northern services)

## Other formats

If you need this leaflet in another format such as audio CD, Braille, large print, high contrast, British Sign Language or translated into another language, contact the Patient Advice and Liaison Service:

- 01392 402093 (for Mid Devon, East Devon and Exeter services)
- 01271 314090 (for North Devon services)
- [rduh.pals@nhs.net](mailto:rduh.pals@nhs.net)

## Preparation before your examination

We will need you to prepare your large bowel for this examination by altering your diet and drinking bowel preparation medication at specific times.

**It is very important to read all of the following instructions as set out below.**

The instructions describe what to eat and drink for the two days before and the morning of your scan. The closer you can follow these instructions, the more accurate the test will be.

You will need to stay close to a toilet on the day before your examination at all times as the bowel preparation may act as a laxative.

**If you are taking iron tablets, please stop taking them for the five days before your scan.**

**Do not stop taking your normal medication except if you take chlorpropamide**, which should be omitted 24 hours before the examination.

**Do not take Omnipaque™ and Picolax™ if you:**

- Have any allergies to contrast media (Omnipaque™) or Picolax™ (contact the x-ray department)
- Have become unwell after previously taking Picolax™
- Feel that there is any possibility that you may be pregnant
- Suffer from regular choking/coughing episodes when drinking fluids (this is a condition called aspiration)
- Have been diagnosed with a fluid/electrolyte imbalance

**Two days before your scan – low-fibre diet****You can eat low-fibre foods including the following:**

- Milk (2 cups per day)
- Plain yoghurt
- Cheese
- Tofu
- Margarine / butter
- Eggs
- White rice / white pasta
- White bread
- Clear jelly
- Oxo™ or Bovril™
- Boiled sweets
- Chocolate (no fruit or nut pieces)  
Ice cream
- Salt, pepper, sugar, sweeteners and honey
- White fish or chicken: boiled, steamed or grilled
- Potatoes with no skin i.e. mashed or boiled
- Clear or sieved soups

**Do not eat high-fibre foods such as:**

- Red meats
- Pink fish (e.g. salmon)
- Fruit
- Vegetables
- Salad
- Mushrooms
- Cereals, nuts, seeds
- Pips, bran, beans
- Brown / wild rice
- Lentils
- Brown bread
- Brown pasta
- Pickles or chutneys
- Sweet corn

**Have plenty to drink from tea, coffee, squash, fizzy drinks, water, clear fruit juice (i.e. apple, grape, cranberry).**

**Suggested meals could include:**

- White bread / toast with butter and honey.
- Boiled or poached egg.
- Grilled white fish or chicken with white rice and boiled potatoes (no skin)
- Scrambled eggs on white toast, vanilla ice cream.
- Firm tofu with potato or white bread or white rice
- Clear soup (no solid bits, e.g., sieved chicken noodle)

## Mixing instructions for bowel preparation with Omnipaque™ for CT colonography scan

**(These instructions are to be used the *day before* your CT Colonography scan)**

You have been supplied with an oral bowel cleansing agent (sometimes called “bowel prep”) called **Picolax™** and a special contrast dye called **Omnipaque™**. The purpose of this is to prepare your bowels to ensure the effectiveness of the planned CT colonography.

There is a small risk of developing dehydration, low blood pressure or kidney problems with this medication. The person prescribing the oral bowel cleansing agent will have assessed your risk and identified the most appropriate medication for you.

The bowel prep will cause diarrhea. It usually acts within 3 hours of the first dose so you will need to stay close to toilet facilities.

The bowel prep can cause dehydration so you should maintain a good fluid intake whilst taking these medications. Drink plenty of clear fluids and follow the low-fibre diet the day before taking your bowel prep.

If you develop symptoms of dehydration and cannot increase your fluid intake, then you should seek medical attention. These symptoms include dizziness or light-headedness (particularly on standing up), thirst or reduction in passing urine.

## The day before the scan

You are able to have a light breakfast as detailed previously. Following this, you are not allowed to eat any solid food but it is very important that you drink plenty of clear fluid. You should aim to drink a glass of water, juice, tea or coffee **without milk** every hour before your scan (except when sleeping).

**At 7am:** One sachet of **Picolax™** to be mixed with 150mls cold water. Mix in a large jug or container to prevent overflow. Heat may be generated during mixing so allow the solution to cool before drinking.



Drink 25mls of contrast (Omnipaque™). Place the remaining 25mls of contrast (Omnipaque™) in the fridge for later use.

**Breakfast (not later than 8am):** This meal should be limited to boiled or poached egg and/or white bread, a scraping of butter or margarine. Tea and coffee may be taken but with **no milk or cream**.

Alternative breakfast: white bread with 2 tablespoons of **smooth** nut (peanut/almond/cashew) butter.



**No further solid food to be eaten until after the scan.**

**At 4pm:** Take another sachet of **Picolax™** to be mixed with 150mls cold water. Mix in a large jug or container to prevent overflow. Heat may be generated during mixing so allow the solution to cool before drinking.

**After 4pm: If you are diabetic, please do not take any further diabetic medication until after your scan.** All other medication can be taken normally.

Drink as much clear liquid as possible. You can still have clear soup, jelly, Bovril™, Oxo™ drinks, water, clear fluid and fizzy drinks.

You should aim to drink a glass of water, juice, tea or coffee **without milk** every hour before your scan (except when sleeping).

**At 8pm:** Take the remaining 25mls of contrast (Omnipaque™) that you placed in the fridge earlier.

**Note – If you suffer from constipation and you take opioid medications (e.g. Codeine, Morphine) it is advisable to stop for two days before you start the Picolax™ sachets, as these medications can interfere with the emptying of your bowel.**

## On the morning of your scan

**Do not eat any solid food. You may drink water.**

**Medication: If you are diabetic, do not take diabetic tablets until after the examination.** All other medication should be taken as normal.

After the examination you can eat and drink normally. You may want to bring some food along with you. You will be offered a choice of hot drink and some biscuits.

Your bowel movements may be irregular (loose) up to 12 hours after the examination.

## Further information

**If you have diabetes and take insulin and/or gliclazide,** please contact the specialist diabetes nurses for advice regarding your medication.

Tel: 01271 322 726

Monday – Friday, 8am – 5.30pm

### **For female patients:**

If there is any chance of being pregnant, please notify the department.

If you take oral contraceptives, the diarrhoea may reduce their effectiveness. Continue taking oral contraceptives but use other precautions for the remainder of that cycle.

## Your notes

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### PALS

The Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) ensures that the NHS listens to patients, relatives, carers and friends, answers questions and resolves concerns as quickly as possible. If you have a query or concern, please contact PALS:

- 01392 402093 (for Mid Devon, East Devon and Exeter services)
- 01271 314090 (for North Devon services)
- rduh.pals@nhs.net

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Scan the QR code to visit the Care Opinion website →

Royal Devon University Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust  
[www.royaldevon.nhs.uk](http://www.royaldevon.nhs.uk)

Eastern services  
 Barrack Road, Exeter  
 Devon EX2 5DW  
 Tel: 01392 411611

Northern services  
 Raleigh Park, Barnstaple  
 Devon EX31 4JB  
 Tel. 01271 322577

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