

Bowel preparation advice for Colonoscopy and Flexible Sigmoidoscopy with Picolax and Senna

Other formats

If you need this leaflet in another format such as 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) <mailto:rduh.pals@nhs.net>
- rduh.pals@nhs.net

Preparation

To perform your procedure, it is necessary to have a clear view of the bowel. Please follow our advice carefully to ensure a good result, which is essential for a proper examination.

Do not follow the 'Directions for the preparation of Picolax' on the information leaflet in the Picolax box.

When taking these preparations, some intestinal cramping is normal. If you feel clammy and faint, or if you vomit, please stop taking the preparation and ring the Endoscopy Unit helpline on 01392 402400 for advice.

If you take insulin for diabetes and require further advice, please ring the hospital switchboard on 01392 411611 and ask for the diabetes on-call nurse. You will have to leave a message including your name and telephone number, and please state that you require advice on preparation for colonoscopy. You will be rung back as soon as the nurse becomes available.

Please follow these steps to prepare for your colonoscopy or flexible sigmoidoscopy

1. Five days before your colonoscopy or flexible sigmoidoscopy

Do not eat any nuts or seeds

If you take iron tablets or medications to control diarrhoea, please stop taking them until after your colonoscopy. You should continue to take any other medication, including laxatives.

Stop taking the following medication

- Imodium® (loperamide)
- Codeine Phosphate
- Lomitol® (co-phenotrope)
- Iron Tablets or multivitamins that contain iron
- Fybogel® (ispaghula husk)

Please note that all other medications such as heart tablets and blood pressure tablets should be continued as normal, including on the day of your test. The pre-assessment nurse will advise you during your pre-assessment appointment if you are diabetic or taking any medication which thins your blood, other than aspirin (which you can remain on) Please have a list of your medication ready for your pre-assessment appointment.

2. Three days before

You may eat your normal meals for the whole day but avoid high fibre foods such as fruit, vegetables, wholemeal bread and 'All-Bran' (please see dietary advice on pages three and four).

3. Two days before

You may continue to eat as yesterday until **2pm**, then you should stop eating solid food until after your appointment. You should drink plenty of clear fluids (aim for two cups an hour) and try to vary the drinks you take. Clear fluids include water, tea and coffee without milk, carbonated drinks, clear soups and broths made without thickening agents, beer, wine and spirits. Boiled sweets are allowed, too. Please see the full list of permitted clear fluids on page four.

You may have been provided with Senna liquid or tablets to help prepare your bowel for colonoscopy. If you have been provided with Senna liquid, at **6pm** take 50mls of Senna liquid and wash it down with water. If you have been provided with Senna tablets, at **6pm** take the Senna tablets over a period of an hour to an hour and a half and take each tablet with plenty of water.

It is normal to experience some stomach cramping after taking Senna and it can make you feel lightheaded. If you need to use the bathroom overnight, please get up slowly and sit on the edge of the bed before taking yourself to the toilet.

4. One day before

You have been provided with Picolax to cleanse the bowel. Please take the first dose of Picolax at **8am** and the second sachet at **4pm**. Please follow the instructions provided within this booklet carefully to ensure a good result.

Please continue to drink plenty of clear fluids but do not eat any food (please see list of clear fluids on page four). You will need to be close to toilet facilities, and you may find it necessary to spend the day at home.

Instructions for taking Picolax

Dissolve the contents of the sachet in a cup of cold water, it will warm up but drink it when it has cooled down over the period of 30 minutes to an hour. Once you have taken the Picolax drink a litre of clear fluid over the next two hours. You should experience frequent bowel actions followed by diarrhoea 2-3 hours after taking Picolax.

5. The day of your colonoscopy or flexible sigmoidoscopy

On the day of your examination, you may drink clear non-fizzy fluids, such as plain squash, black tea or coffee (no milk) until your procedure. Please drink.

Dietary advice

You may find this information helpful in choosing your diet during your preparation for your colonoscopy or flexible sigmoidoscopy.

✓ Choose	✗ Avoid
Cereals: Cornflakes, Rice Krispies, Ricles, Frosties, Sugar Puffs, Coco Pops, gluten free alternatives	Wheat bran, All-Bran, Weetabix, Shredded Wheat, oat bran, branflakes, wheatflakes, muesli, Ready Brek, porridge
Bread: white bread, bagels, baguettes, muffins, etc. Anything made with white flour.	Wholemeal, high fibre white, soft grain or granary bread, oat bread
Pasta: white pasta, white rice	Wholemeal pasta, brown rice
Flour: white	Wholemeal or granary flour, wheatgerm
Mashed or boiled potato	Fruit and vegetables
Savouries: chicken, turkey, fish, cheese and eggs or vegan/alternative	All red meats
Puddings, pastries, cakes, etc: milk puddings, mousse, sponge cakes, Madeira cake, rich tea biscuits or wafer biscuits, custard creams, vanilla ice-cream.	Those containing wholemeal flour, oatmeal, nuts, dried fruit e.g. fruit cake, Ryvita, digestive or Hobnob biscuits etc.
Preserve and sweets: sugar, jam, marmalade (no bits), honey, syrup, lemon curd	Jam or marmalade with pips, skins and seeds, sweets and chocolates containing nuts and/or fruit, muesli bars
Soups: clear or sieved soups e.g. Consommé	Chunky vegetable, lentil or bean soups
Miscellaneous: salt, pepper, vinegar, mustard, salad cream, mayonnaise, boiled sweets, glucose tablets, mints	Nuts, Quorn, fresh ground peppercorns, hummus

Clear fluids

Below is a list of items that can still be taken after you have stopped eating solid food.

✓ Choose	✗ Avoid
All types of water	Please AVOID ALL milk-based drinks such as milkshakes, cappuccino or fruit smoothies
Lucozade® and any other “sports drinks”	
Black tea and coffee (including fruit and herbal teas)	
Fizzy drinks e.g. coke, ginger beer, tonic water	Avoid orange Juice, grapefruit, pineapple juice, tomato juice
Clear fruit juice such as apple, cranberry, pomegranate, red and white grape juice (Not orange juice)	Avoid blackcurrant, summer fruit flavour.
Any fruit squash	
Hot honey and lemon	
Oxo, Marmite, Bovril	
Consommé (clear soup)	Avoid black or red jelly babies, wine gums or fruit pastilles
Any sugar-based sweets e.g. Foxes® Glacier Fruits and Mints, Polos, dextrose tablets may also be taken	

Current medication

It is important that you make your nurse aware if you are taking any of the following medication so that they may decide if bowel preparation is suitable for you to take.

- Anticoagulants e.g. Warfarin, Rivaroxaban, Dabagatran
- Antiplatelet agents e.g. Aspirin, Clopidogrel
- Diuretics (water tablets)
- Corticosteroids for example Prednisolone
- Lithium
- Digoxin
- Non-steroidal anti-inflammatory medicines, for example Diclofenac and Ibuprofen
- Tricyclic anti-depressants, for example Amitiptyline, Clomipramine, Trazodone
- Antipsychotic drugs, for example Chlorpromazine, Clozapine, Risperidone
- Carbamazepine
- Antiepileptics
- Contraceptives

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 →

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