

## **FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT COLONOSCOPY PREP**

*Please see if your question is answered here before calling the office.*

- 1. When does my clear liquid diet start? Can I have breakfast or lunch?** The clear liquid diet starts as soon as you get up in the morning. You may have NO solid food all day the day before the procedure. Do not confine yourself to mealtimes to drink liquids, or you'll get too hungry. Sip on fluids all day. There is no limit on the amount of clear liquids you are allowed to drink.
- 2. Is there any way to make the prep taste better?** If the taste bothers you, try drinking it with a straw placed far back on your tongue. Between glasses, you can suck on hard candy or rinse your mouth with any of the clear liquids or mouthwash.
- 3. Why avoid red liquids?** The artificial red dye stains the lining of the colon and can look like blood or inflamed tissue.
- 4. One of my medications is red. Can I take it?** Yes.
- 5. Can I take my morning medications?** Please take any of the following medications you're on with a sip of water: blood pressure, heart medications, anti-seizure medications, birth control pills and prednisone. If you use eye drops for glaucoma, be sure to take them on schedule. If you're on diabetes medications, bring them with you to the hospital to take with the snack you'll have prior to discharge.
- 6. I feel like vomiting and don't think I can drink any more. What should I do?** It is important that you continue drinking the solution if at all possible. Without a clean bowel, the doctor will not be able to see inside of your colon to complete the examination. If you feel like vomiting, or do vomit, wait 30 minutes and begin drinking the solution again. If you still cannot continue to drink it, call our office.
- 7. I drank a lot of the solution and haven't gone to the bathroom yet. What should I do?** Keep drinking. Most people have a bowel movement after an hour, but some take longer.
- 8. I am taking the prep and am now having loose, watery stools. Do I still need the rest of the prep?** Yes, you may have solid stool higher in the colon that needs to be eliminated.
- 9. I already have diarrhea before taking the prep. Do I still need to do the whole prep?** Yes, you must take the prep as directed by your doctor. Your colon is approximately 6 feet long. The entire colon must be completely cleaned out for your doctor to get a good look.

10. **I see yellow color in the toilet bowl and a few flecks of stool. What do I do?** If you drank the entire solution, or if your last bowel movements were clear enough that you were able to see the bottom of the toilet bowl, you should be fine. It is OK if you have some flecks of material. The yellow color is the result of bile that normally colors the feces. If your output is brown or you are still passing pieces of stool after completing the whole prep, call the office. If the office is closed, report this to the nurse at the endoscopy unit as soon as you arrive.
11. **My bottom is sore. What can I do?** Try using a wet washcloth instead of toilet paper. Gently pat instead of rubbing. You can apply Vaseline or Preparation H, Anusol, or Desitin if you have it.
12. **Can I drink alcoholic beverages?** These are clear liquids, but we suggest you do not consume alcoholic beverages prior to your procedure since they can cause dehydration and some wines may thin your blood.
13. **Can I chew gum or suck on candy?** Yes, but nothing with soft centers or red color.
14. **Can I brush my teeth?** Please do.
15. **Can I wear my dentures?** Yes, you may wear your dentures to the endoscopy unit. You may be asked to remove them during the procedure.
16. **I have been instructed not to take blood thinners or anti-inflammatories several days before the procedure. What can I take if I get a headache or painful joints?** You may take Tylenol as directed. If you need a prescription pain reliever, call your primary care doctor.
17. **Can I have chicken soup?** You can only have the broth. No chicken or noodles are permitted. Beef broth is OK also.
18. **Can I have the colonoscopy done if I'm on my menstrual period?** Yes, the procedure can still be performed. You may wear either a tampon or pad.
19. **What if I don't have a driver to bring me home?** You will need to reschedule your procedure to a time when you will have a driver available.
20. **What if I have a cold or cough?** If you have a fever, a severe cough, the stomach flu, or don't feel well enough to do the prep, please call our office with as much notice as possible to reschedule your procedure. It is OK to have a colonoscopy if you are taking an antibiotic for a sinus or lung infection as long as you don't have a fever or feel too ill to complete the prep.
21. **On the day of my Colonoscopy, how long will I be at the hospital?** Plan to be at the hospital for 3 hours.