Who should be screened for colorectal cancer?

In the United States, we screen all male and female adults for colorectal cancer. The age to start colorectal cancer screening depends on several factors.

- Average-risk individuals (no family history or predisposing conditions) should begin screening at age 50. Some organizations, including the American Cancer Society, recommend that average-risk adults begin screening at age 45. However, there are few scientific data to support screening average-risk individuals before age 50. At UCLA, we screen all average-risk individuals from age 50 to 80.

- Individuals with a family history of colon or rectal cancer or with a predisposing condition for colorectal cancer (for example, Crohn’s disease or ulcerative colitis) should speak with their doctor about initiating screening early.

- African-Americans have a higher risk for colorectal cancer and should begin screening at age 45.

Why did my doctor recommend a screening colonoscopy?

Your doctor has recommended a colonoscopy to screen you for colorectal cancer. Colorectal cancer includes both colon and rectal cancer and is the third most commonly diagnosed cancer in both men and women in the United States. But it doesn’t have to be. Many colorectal cancers and deaths can be prevented with the use of established screening tests designed to find pre-cancerous polyps and early cancers before they cause symptoms. Colonoscopy is one of these tests.
How do I prepare for colonoscopy?

**DISCUSS MEDICATIONS** and any health conditions you have with your doctor. Your doctor will provide instructions for how to appropriately adjust your medications prior to your procedure. Instructions may include the following changes:

- Stop medications that are for diarrhea (Imodium®, Kaopectate®) or that contain iron 7 days prior to your procedure.
- You will need to temporarily discontinue blood thinners prior to your procedure. The length of time to stop your medication depends on the drug you are taking. Please consult your prescribing doctor.
- If you are diabetic, your medications may need to be adjusted. Please consult your prescribing doctor.
- Take your usual morning medications (including blood pressure medications), at least 4 hours prior to your procedure with a small amount of water.

**SCHEDULE** your colonoscopy. Please call our Patient Communication Center (PCC) at 310-825-7540 to schedule your colonoscopy if it was not scheduled for you at your clinic appointment. Note: The PCC may also call you to schedule the procedure.

**LOCATION**  Your colonoscopy will likely take place in one of six UCLA procedure locations listed below. Complete list of locations are listed on the last page.

- **UCLA Medical Center**
  200 UCLA Medical Plaza
  (Check in 1 hour before procedure time)
  200 UCLA Medical Plaza #320
  Los Angeles, CA 90095

- **Santa Clarita**
  (Check in 1 hour before procedure time)
  25775 McBean Pkwy #115
  Valencia, CA 91355

- **Ronald Reagan UCLA Medical Center**
  (Check in 2 hours before procedure time)
  757 Westwood Plaza,
  Admissions, Room 1314
  Los Angeles, CA 90095

- **Torrance / South Bay**
  (Check in 1 hour before procedure time)
  2780 Skypark Dr #135
  Torrance, CA 90505

- **UCLA Medical Center, Santa Monica**
  Suite #1401
  (Check in 1 hour before)
  Suite #G-314
  (Check in 2 hours before)
  1250 16th St
  Santa Monica, CA 90404

- **West Hills**
  (Check in 1 hour before procedure time)
  7320 Woodlake Ave #320
  West Hills, CA 91307

**ARRANGE** for a friend or family member to drive you home after the colonoscopy, as you will still be drowsy from sedation and it is unsafe to drive.

- You must have an adult accompany you home the day of your procedure, even if you take a cab. The medical procedure staff must be able to contact whoever will accompany you. If this person cannot be confirmed prior to the procedure, your procedure will be rescheduled for your safety.
- You should not drive a car, operate machinery, or make any legal decisions until the day after your procedure.
If the bowel is not clean when you arrive to the procedures unit, rather than giving you an incomplete and poor examination, your procedure will need to be rescheduled.

3 DAYS PRIOR to your procedure, eat a LOW RESIDUE DIET. A low residue diet limits high fiber foods.

HIGH FIBER FOODS TO AVOID INCLUDE:
- Whole grain breads, oatmeal/cereals, granola
- Nuts, seeds, raw/dried vegetables or fruit (NO salads)
- Beverages with pulp
- Nutritional supplements that contain fiber
- Pepper, beans, corn/popcorn

FOODS YOU MAY EAT INCLUDE:
- Cream of wheat/grits, white rice, and refined pastas/noodles
- Cooked fresh/canned vegetables
- Vegetables without seeds including asparagus, beets, carrots, mushrooms, green beans, and potatoes without skin
- Bananas, soft cantaloupe, honeydew, avocado
- Chicken, fish, beef, pork, tofu, eggs
- Margarine, butters/oils, smooth sauces and dressings
- Cakes, cookies, pudding, ice cream without nuts or seeds
- Hard candy, popsicles, yogurt and cheese

1 DAY PRIOR to your procedure, eat only a CLEAR LIQUID DIET. A clear liquid diet consists only of liquids that you would be able to read a newspaper through.

CLEAR LIQUID DIET INCLUDES:
- Water, mineral water
- Clear fruit juices without pulp (apple, white grape, white cranberry, lemonade, etc.)
- Clear carbonated and non-carbonated soft drinks or sports drinks
- Store-bought and >99% fat-free broth (chicken, beef, vegetable, or bone broth)
- Popsicles or gelatin (such as Jell-O)
- Coffee or tea (without milk or cream)
1 DAY PRIOR to your procedure, you should also TAKE THE COLON PREP MEDICATION. Please follow the instructions on your prescription.

BOWEL PREP MEDICATION

There are several types of bowel prep medication (i.e. GoLYTELY®, MiraLAX®, MoviPrep®, OsmoPrep®, SUPREP®, CLENPIQ®, PLENVU®, etc.). All bowel prep medications follow a “split-dose” process, which means you take the colon prep in two doses: the first dose is taken between 3pm and 6pm the night before your procedure; the second dose is taken 6-8 hours before your procedure. Be sure to follow the instructions specific to your bowel prep medication. In most cases, you will learn about which prep to take when your procedure is scheduled.

WHAT TO EXPECT

- You will develop significant diarrhea after drinking the preparation. Plan to be near a bathroom. This is normal as it means the medication is working to clear stool from your colon.
- Most people feel mild bloating and mild abdominal cramps. This is normal. Drinking the prep medication more slowly and over a longer period of time can help alleviate these symptoms.
- A successful colon prep will cause you to have clear yellow (“tea-colored”) liquid stools.
- Please finish your preparation regardless of your stool color.

STAY HYDRATED with at least 12 tall glasses (about 8-10 ounces each) of clear liquids throughout the day in addition to what you drink with your bowel prep medication to prevent dehydration.

4 HOURS BEFORE your procedure, you should STOP DRINKING ALL CLEAR LIQUIDS AND MEDICATIONS. This means that you should not have anything to eat or drink 4 hours before your colonoscopy and onward.

AFTER YOUR COLONOSCOPY PROCEDURE

You will spend time in our post-procedure unit where our nursing staff will monitor you. Once it is felt safe, you will be able to leave with your driver/escort. You will receive a printed copy of your colonoscopy results for your own records. Once home, you may resume your normal diet and medications.

Colon cancer is a leading cause of cancer-related death but is preventable with screening.
A colonoscopy is a procedure that allows your doctor to examine the inside of your lower digestive tract, also known as your colon and rectum. The procedure uses a colonoscope ("scope") – a long flexible tube with a light and camera at the end – to examine the inside lining of the colon. It allows the doctor performing the test to find and remove precancerous polyps and early colon cancers.

The day before the test, you will do a bowel prep to empty and clean your colon. The bowel prep includes a strong laxative and liquid diet. Following the directions of the bowel prep makes it easier for your doctor to detect polyps and other abnormalities during the colonoscopy.

Colonoscopy is performed in a hospital or medical clinic. Before the procedure starts, you will be given anesthesia or medication through an IV to make you comfortable. Then, the doctor will gently insert the colonoscope into the rectum and guide it through the entire colon.

Your doctor will take pictures and remove polyps along the way. He/she will then send the polyps to a lab for further testing. If a polyp cannot be removed, a sample may be taken. This is called a biopsy.

The colonoscopy usually takes 15 to 30 minutes to complete. Risks of colonoscopy include bleeding, infection, and perforation; however, complications occur in only 1 out of 1,000 colonoscopies at UCLA Health.
# UCLA Colonoscopy Procedure Locations

## UCLA LOCATIONS

### WESTWOOD
- **UCLA Medical Center**
  - 200 UCLA Medical Plaza
  - (Check in 1 hour before procedure time)
  - 200 UCLA Medical Plaza #320
  - Los Angeles, CA 90095

- **Ronald Reagan UCLA Medical Center**
  - (Check in 2 hours before procedure time)
  - 757 Westwood Plaza, Admissions, Room 1314
  - Los Angeles, CA 90095

### SANTA CLARITA
- **Santa Clarita**
  - (Check in 1 hour before procedure time)
  - 25775 McBean Pkwy #115
  - Valencia, CA 91355

### SANTA MONICA
- **UCLA Medical Center, Santa Monica**
  - Suite #1401
    - (Check in 1 hour before)
  - Suite #G-314
    - (Check in 2 hours before)
  - 1250 16th St
  - Santa Monica, CA 90404

### TORRANCE
- **Torrance / South Bay**
  - (Check in 1 hour before procedure time)
  - 2780 Skypark Dr #135
  - Torrance, CA 90505

### WEST HILLS
- **West Hills**
  - (Check in 1 hour before procedure time)
  - 7320 Woodlake Ave #320
  - West Hills, CA 91307

### OTHER LOCATIONS

### BURBANK
- **Providence Saint Josephs Health Center**
  - (Check in 1.5 hours before procedure time. Labs and EKG done within 30 days)
  - 501 S. Buena Vista St
  - Burbank, CA 91505

### ENCINO
- **Speciality Surgical Center Encino**
  - (Check in 1 hour before procedure time)
  - 16501 Ventura Blvd #103
  - Encino, CA 91436

### SANTA CLARITA
- **Henry Mayo Newhall Memorial Hospital**
  - (Check in 1 hour before procedure time)
  - 23845 McBean Pkwy
  - Valencia, CA 91355

### THOUSAND OAKS
- **Los Robles Hospital**
  - (Check in 1 hour before procedure time)
  - 215 W. Janss Rd
  - Thousand Oaks, CA 91360

- **Los Robles Surgicenter**
  - (Check in 1 hour before procedure time)
  - 2190 Lynn Rd #100
  - Thousand Oaks, CA 91360

### WEST HILLS
- **West Hills Hospital**
  - (Check in 2 hours before procedure time)
  - 7300 Medical Center Dr
  - West Hills, CA 91307

### WESTLAKE VILLAGE
- **Specialty Surgical Center Westlake**
  - (Check in 1 hour before procedure time)
  - 696 Hampshire Rd #100
  - Westlake Village, CA 91361

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Visit us at [uclahealth.org/colon-cancer-screening](http://uclahealth.org/colon-cancer-screening)  
Questions? 310-825-7540