Your Colonoscopy: Bowel Preparation Instructions

Learn what a screening colonoscopy entails in this guide. Use the checklist to ensure you’ve completed all the steps prior to your screening colonoscopy.

Date: ______________@ ____________
By Dr. _______________________

☐ 200 Medical Plaza
   (Check in 1 hour before procedure time)
   200 Medical Plaza Suite 320
   Los Angeles, CA 90095

☐ Ronald Reagan Hospital
   (Check in 2 hours before procedure time)
   757 Westwood Plaza
   Admissions – Room 1314
   Los Angeles, CA 90095

☐ Santa Monica Hospital
   (Check in 1 hour before procedure time)
   1250 16^TH Street Suite 1401
   Santa Monica, CA 90404

Do you have questions?
Please call: 310-825-7540
Business Hours: M-F, 7:30-5:00

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Your doctor has referred you for a colonoscopy. Based on your doctor’s order, you will be given sedation or anesthesia for this procedure. While you are drowsy or sleeping, the doctor will examine the lining of your colon (large intestine). Your colon must be empty so that your doctor can clearly view your colon. 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.

**Medications**

- Stop medications that are for diarrhea (Imodium, kaopectate) or contain iron 7 days prior to your procedure.
- Blood thinners will need to be temporarily discontinued prior to procedure. The length of time you'll need to stop your medication depends upon which drug you are taking. Instructions will be provided and you should consult with your prescribing doctor.
- Insulin/diabetes medication doses may need to be adjusted. Consult your prescribing doctor.
- Take your usual morning medicines, especially those for blood pressure, at least 2-4 hours prior to your procedure with a small amount of water.

**Transportation**

- You must have someone 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. Your ride may call 310-794-1681 (Westwood), 310-582-6240 (Santa Monica) before your appointment time on your procedure day.
- You should not drive a car, operate machinery, or make any legal decisions until the day after your procedure.

**Diet Timeline (See page 3 for specific diets)**

- 3 days prior to your procedure, eat a low residue diet.
- Then, starting on the day before your procedure, your diet will change to a clear liquid diet. This will continue throughout the day up until 3 hours* prior to your procedure.
- Diet specifics are outlined on page 3.
Low Residue Diet (3 days prior)

A low residue diet limits high-fiber foods. Please avoid:
- 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

You can eat:
- Cream of wheat/grits, white rice, refined pastas/noodles
- Cooked fresh/canned vegetables and vegetables without seeds including asparagus, beets, carrots, mushrooms, green beans, 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

Clear Liquid Diet (1 day before and up to 3 hours* prior)

- A clear liquid diet consists of any liquid you can see through that is NOT RED
- Drink at least ten to twelve 8 oz. glasses of water throughout the day. No mints/gum/candies

You can drink:
- Water, mineral water
- Clear fruit juices without pulp (apple, white grape, white cranberry, lemonade, etc)
- Clear carbonated and non-carbonated soft drinks, clear sports drinks
- Chicken broth/vegetable broth
- Popsicles or gelatin
- You may also have one cup of coffee or tea without milk or milk products

No food or drink 3 hours* prior
**Golytely**

**Golytely or generic equivalent:** You will receive one 4-liter container with powdered bowel preparation

**Preparing your bowel preparation – Two nights before your colonoscopy:**
- Fill the Golytely bottle with water to the indicated line on the side of the bottle. Shake vigorously and refrigerate overnight.

**Drinking your bowel preparation**
3-6 PM the night before your colonoscopy
- Shake vigorously again and drink half of the bottle (2 liters): one-10 oz. glass every 10-15 minutes. If you are able, walk about while drinking the liquid.

6-8 hours before your colonoscopy:
- Drink second half of the bottle (2 liters) as above
Your Bowel Preparation

- The smell or taste may upset your senses. Please continue your bowel preparation as prescribed.
- You will develop significant diarrhea after drinking the preparation. Plan to be near a bathroom.
- Most people feel some bloating and mild abdominal cramps. This is normal.
- If you experience moderate nausea, abdominal fullness, and bloating, stop drinking temporarily or drink each portion at longer intervals until these symptoms disappear.
- A well-prepared colon produces yellow liquid. Please finish your preparation regardless of your stool color.

Day of Procedure

- The test will take about 30-45 minutes, but expect to spend more time since you will need to prepare for and recover from your test.
- Expect to spend 2-3 hours at the facility, although this may vary.
Pre-Procedure Checklist

Once you receive these instructions:
- Pick up your bowel preparation
- Ask your prescribing doctors about your medications, especially blood thinners & diabetes medications
- Find transportation and someone to accompany you to and from your procedure

1 week prior:
- Stop medications that are for diarrhea or that contain iron
- If recommended by your prescribing doctor, stop blood thinners

3 days prior:
- Start low residue diet
- Confirm your ride and your accompanying friend or family member

2 days prior:
- Mix your bowel preparation and refrigerate for the next day

1 day prior:
- Begin a clear liquid diet
- 3-6 PM night before procedure: Take half of your bowel preparation
- 6-8 hours before procedure: Take the second half of your bowel preparation

Day of your procedure
- Take your morning blood pressure and diabetes medications unless otherwise specified by your prescribing doctor.
- 3 hours* prior: Nothing by mouth including gums/mints/candies
- Great Job! Head to your procedures unit. We look forward to seeing you.

*Please note that if you are also undergoing an EGD, you should not eat 4 hours prior

Thank you for choosing UCLA!