

Preparing for your Colonoscopy

You will not be permitted to drive for 24 hours. Please arrange for a responsible adult to take you home and stay with you for 24 hours after your procedure. Patients who fail to bring a driver/someone to stay with them for the night will have their procedure **CANCELLED** immediately.

Do not use marijuana, alcohol or street drugs within 24 hours of your appointment time. The use of these can interact with the medication used to sedate you. Failure to follow these guidelines could result in having your test **CANCELLED** when you arrive in the endoscopy department.

Please arrive at the Hospital one hour before your appointment time.

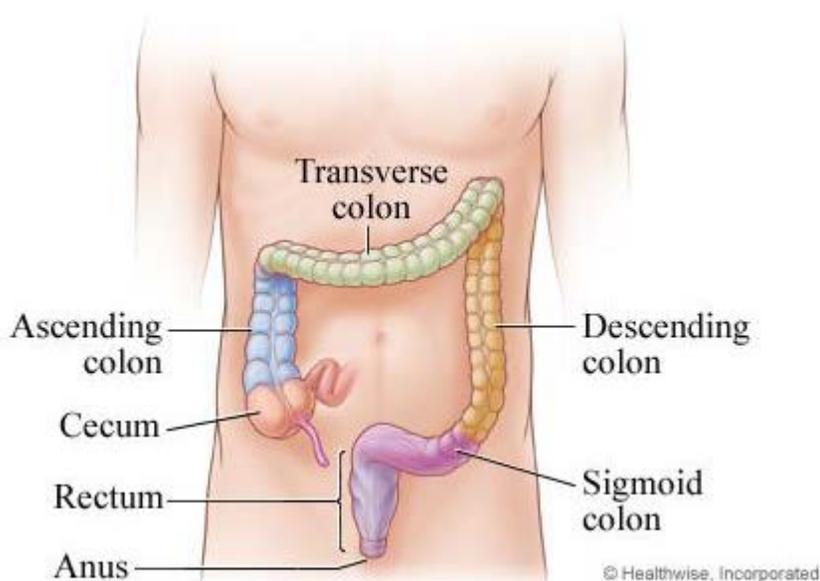
What is a Colonoscopy?

A Colonoscopy is a safe procedure that gives your doctor information other tests may not be able to give, by examining the lower part of the gastrointestinal tract, which is called the colon or large intestine (bowel). It is performed by an endoscopist, a doctor with special training in endoscopy procedures.

The colonoscope is inserted into the anus and advanced through to the end of the colon (the cecum) and possibly a short distance into the small intestine. The procedure generally takes from 20 minutes to an hour.

In order to perform this procedure, the inside lining of your colon must be cleaned of stool to permit the doctor to perform a thorough examination. This is accomplished in two ways:

- by restricting what you eat.
- by giving you laxatives.



While a colonoscopy prep is specially designed to help you stay hydrated, you are going to lose a lot of fluid as your bowel is flushed clean. Even mild dehydration can cause uncomfortable symptoms, including dizziness, lightheadedness, and headache. Therefore, it is important to drink plenty of clear fluids before, during, and after the prep process.

Medication Information

- Check with your doctor to see if you need to adjust any of your medications prior to the procedure.
- Stop iron supplements 7 days prior to the procedure as they will make it harder to clean the bowel.
- If you are taking blood pressure medications, take your morning dose with a sip of water 4 – 6 hours prior to your procedure.
- You may continue to take your Aspirin/ASA.
- If you are taking blood thinners, please speak to your doctor at least one week prior to the procedure to determine if these need to be stopped. Examples: Plavix, Warfarin, Pradaxa, Eliquis, Xarelto and Aggrenox.
- If you have diabetes and are only using pills, do not take these pills on the morning of your procedure. Examples: Metformin, Januvia, Glyburide, Invokana, Gliclazide.
- If you have diabetes and are using insulin, ask your doctor before the procedure how to adjust your dose.

The Day of Your Colonoscopy

- Be sure to have a bath or shower the morning of the test and wear comfortable clothing.
- Body piercings and/or jewelry should be removed before the procedure.
- Bring your MCP card with you.
- Leave jewelry and valuables at home.
- Do not wear perfume or cologne products before going to the hospital.
- Bring a list of the medications you are currently taking.
- Tell the nurse and doctor about any allergies to food, medication or latex.
- Tell the nurse and doctor about any implanted devices (for example: pacemaker, defibrillator, orthopedic surgery plates or screws, nerve stimulators, etc.)

- Tell the nurse and doctor if you have had any joint replacements, especially within the last year.
- A nurse will complete an interview with you and check your vital signs (blood pressure, pulse, oxygen level).
- Your stay in the unit could be up to two hours.

During the Colonoscopy

- If you have not already done so, you will be asked to sign a consent form for the procedure.
- Prior to the colonoscopy, a nurse will prepare you for the examination.
- The nurse will start an intravenous line (put a needle in a vein in your arm) to administer medications to help you relax and keep you comfortable during the examination. Your vital signs will be monitored during the examination and for a time after the colonoscopy is over.
- The colonoscopy will be performed with you lying on your left side. Medications will be administered through the intravenous line.
- The colonoscope is a flexible tube, approximately the size of your index finger. It has a lens and a light that allows the doctor to view your bowel on a TV monitor.
- The colonoscope contains channels that allow the doctor to obtain biopsies (small pieces of tissue), remove polyps and to introduce or withdraw fluid or air. Neither of these hurt since the lining of the colon does not have that type of pain sensation.
- Air is introduced through the scope to open the colon so that the scope can be moved forward and to allow the doctor to see.
- You may experience a feeling of bloating or gas cramps from the air as it distends the colon. Do not be embarrassed about releasing the air through your rectum if you can. It is important for you to let the doctor know if you are uncomfortable.
- The colonoscopy procedure takes approximately 20 – 40 minutes. A nurse will stay with you and assist the doctor during the test.

Eating Instructions

All bowel preparations - On the day before your test drink only clear fluids. **NO SOLID FOOD.**

If you are required to take medications on the morning of the procedure, they may be taken with sips of water up to four hours before your appointment time. Otherwise, stop taking fluids 6 hours prior to your procedure.

If this preparation is unacceptable, please contact your doctor's office for alternatives.

- Do not eat any nuts, berries or seeds, or foods that contain them for one week prior to your procedure.
- Eat only light low fiber meals two days prior to your scheduled colonoscopy.
- Mix and take laxative as you have been instructed. Be prepared to spend most of your preparation day in the washroom.
- To help reduce irritation and discomfort to your anal area, avoid rubbing. Instead pat gently with a wet washcloth or pre-moistened wipes, or rinse with water. Apply protective cream or ointment such as Vaseline or diaper rash cream after each trip to the washroom.
- It is extremely important that you drink plenty of water and clear fluids while you are cleansing your bowel to prevent dehydration plus it also aids in the cleansing. Do not drink anything that is red or purple. Clear fluids are any liquids that you can see through— water, apple juice, white cranberry juice, clear sport drinks (Gatorade or PowerAde), clear sodas (ginger ale, 7-up), popsicles, Jell-O, chicken, vegetable or beef broth without parsley or herb flakes, or tea or coffee without milk or cream. Drink a minimum of one large glass of clear fluid every hour.
- If you experience nausea (stomach sickness) while drinking your bowel preparation you may try drinking ginger-ale, or you may take an anti-nausea medication such as Gravol™ (dimenhydrinate), as per package directions. This can be purchased at your local pharmacy without a prescription. Again, remember to drink lots of clear fluids while you are preparing for your colonoscopy.
- Please follow the bowel preparation instructions given to you with this information packet. **DO NOT** follow the instructions on the package of bowel preparation medication.

Guide for Clear Fluid Diet

- Do not drink liquids that are red or purple
- Do not consume any alcoholic beverages

You may drink:

- Sports drinks such as Gatorade, All-Sport, PowerAde, etc.
- Vitamin water
- Water
- Apple juice
- White cranberry juice
- Lemonade from powdered mixes
- Fruit-flavored drinks, such as Kool-Aid, Crystal Light, etc.
- Carbonated beverages and soda (7-up, ginger-ale)
- Chicken, vegetable or beef broth without herb flakes
- Jell-O – no red or purple
- Honey
- Popsicles without milk or added fruit pieces

Polyps

Polyps are extra growths of tissue that can range in size from the tip of a pen to several inches (doctors measure them in millimeters and centimeters).

Most polyps are benign (not cancerous) but can turn into cancers if left to grow for a very long time. As a result, they are usually removed so they can be analyzed under the microscope.

You should consult with your doctor after the examination for results of any polyps that were removed.

Recovering from the Colonoscopy

After the colonoscopy, you will be kept for a short time for observation while some of the medicine wears off. The nurse will monitor your blood pressure, pulse and breathing on a regular basis.

The most common discomfort after the examination is a feeling of bloating, and gas cramps. Many people tolerate it very well and feel fine afterwards. You will be encouraged to release the gas after your procedure. You should not feel embarrassed because it is the air that was put in during your procedure.

You may also be very groggy from the sedation medications or you may have difficulty concentrating.

Some fatigue after the examination is common. You should plan to take it easy and relax the rest of the day.

The sedation medication and pain medication will affect your reaction time. Even though you may not feel tired, your judgement and reflexes may not be normal.

You should be able to eat a regular diet after the examination. Ask your doctor when it is safe to restart your current medications.

Discharge instruction will be given to you and your accompanying adult who will be caring for you for the next 24 hours. Please follow these instructions.

Possible Complications

Colonoscopy is a safe procedure and complications are rare, but they can occur:

- Bleeding can occur from biopsies or the removal of polyps, but it is usually minimal and stops quickly or can be controlled.
- The colonoscope can cause a tear or hole in the tissue being examined; but is very uncommon.
- Adverse reactions to the medications used to sedate you are possible.
- The medications can also produce irritation in the vein at the site of the intravenous line. If redness, swelling, or warmth occurs, warm to hot wet towels applied to the site may relieve the discomfort.

The following symptoms should be reported immediately:

- Shortness of breath
- Vomiting
- Fever
- Severe abdominal pain (not just gas cramps)
- A firm, distended abdomen
- Bleeding greater than a few tablespoons

For More Information:

If you have questions before the day of your test, please call the office of the doctor performing your test.

If you have questions on the day of, or the day before your test, regarding preparation or medications, please contact the Endoscopy Suite at:

Western Memorial Hospital: 709-784-6212

Sir Thomas Roddick Hospital: 709-643-5111 – *extension 7217*

Guide for Low Fiber Diet 2 days prior Colonoscopy

Foods that are okay	Foods to Avoid
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • White Bread and rolls. • Plain pancakes, waffles and French toast. • Cold cereals: Puffed Rice, Rice Krispies, and Special K. • Plain crackers, Vanilla wafers, Animal crackers and Pretzels. • White rice or noodles. • Skinless cooked potato. • Skinless chicken or turkey. • Fish and other sea foods. • Well-cooked carrots. • Apple sauce or canned fruits without seeds or skin. • Eggs or plain custard. • Margarine/Butter • Creamy peanut butter 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Whole wheat and seeded breads. • Whole wheat pasta. • Brown or wild rice. • Whole wheat crackers and rolls. • Raw, partially cooked or seeded vegetables. • Meat or meat items with skin. • Fruit yogurt and cheese. • Cereals with seeds, nuts or granola. • All types of corn, onions, beans, peas and lentils. • Nuts, seeds, berries, dried fruit, coconut and popcorn. • Jam, marmalade and preserves, pickles, olives and relish.



Newfoundland and Labrador Colon Screening Program

Bowel Preparation using PegLyte and Dulcolax

Peg-Lyte and Dulcolax can be purchased at your local pharmacy. Instructions for mixing the solution are on the container.

Mix the solution with water as instructed. Then, place it in the refrigerator for 1-2 hours to chill as this improves the taste, and makes it easier to drink.

Start a clear fluid diet the day before your colonoscopy. A clear fluid is any liquid that you can see through. Do not drink milk, juices with pulp, or anything **red** or **purple**. A clear fluid diet can include water, apple juice, white cranberry juice, clear sport drinks, clear sodas (ginger ale, 7-up), popsicles, chicken or beef broth, Jell-O, or tea or coffee without milk or cream. It is very important to drink plenty of clear fluids to prevent dehydration plus it helps clean out the bowel.

For morning colonoscopy (scheduled before 12 p.m.)

Two days before the colonoscopy:

- Eat only light low fiber meals.
- Try and drink a glass of clear fluid every hour.
- Drink clear fluids **only** after your evening meal (1 large glass every hour).
- At **6 p.m.**, take three (3) Dulcolax tablets.

Day before the colonoscopy:

- Do not eat any solid food; drink clear fluids **only** (1 large glass every hour).
- At **12 p.m.**, start drinking two (2) liters of the PegLyte solution over two hours. **Quickly drink 8 ounces every 10 minutes.** If you sip the solution, it will not work as well. **During this time, do not drink anything else.**
- Continue to drink clear fluids after this two-hour period.
- At **6 p.m.**, drink the remaining two (2) liters of the PegLyte solution. Again, drink it over two hours as before.
- When you completely finish the PegLyte solution, continue to drink clear fluids throughout the evening.

Day of colonoscopy:

- You may continue to drink clear fluids until **four (4) hours before** your scheduled appointment. Then you have to fast. This means **nothing to eat or drink for four (4) hours before your appointment time.**

Please see reverse for further instructions →

For afternoon colonoscopy (scheduled 12 p.m. or later)

Two days before the colonoscopy:

- Eat only light low fiber meals.
- Try and drink a glass of clear fluid every hour.
- Drink clear fluids only **after** your evening meal (1 large glass every hour).
- At **6 p.m.**, take three (3) Dulcolax tablets.

Day before the colonoscopy:

- Do not eat any solid food; drink clear fluids **only** (1 large glass every hour).
- At **6 p.m.**, start drinking two (2) liters of PegLyte solution over two (2) hours. **Quickly drink 8 ounces every 10 minutes.** If you sip the solution, it will not work as well. **During this time, do not drink anything else.**
- Continue to drink clear fluids throughout the evening.

Day of colonoscopy:

- At **6 a.m.**, drink the remaining two liters of PegLyte solution. Again, drink it quickly as before.
- You may continue to drink clear fluids until **four (4) hours before** your scheduled appointment. Then you have to fast. This means **nothing to eat or drink for four (4) hours before your appointment time.**

Bowel preparation is a very important part of your colonoscopy procedure. A good bowel preparation allows your doctor to carefully and thoroughly examine the colon. If your bowel is not completely clean and empty, the procedure may need to be stopped or repeated, requiring you to undergo another bowel preparation. A poor bowel preparation increases the risk of missing significant abnormalities such as cancers or polyps and it increases the risk of complications



Newfoundland and Labrador Colon Screening Program

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PegLyte can be purchased at your local pharmacy. Instructions for mixing the solution are on the container.

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