



## Colonoscopy

A colonoscopy is a test that looks at the inner lining of a person's large intestine i.e. the colon.

A doctor may order a colonoscopy for a number of symptoms such as blood in bowel movements, change in bowel habits, anemia, long term abdominal or rectal pain, abnormal results from a different type of colon test or a family history of colon cancer. Additionally, people often use colonoscopy as screening test to check for polyps or for cancer in the colon or rectum. Polyps are growths in the colon that might turn into cancer and the doctor can usually take them out during the colonoscopy. There are 5 or 6 different tests to screen for colon cancer, but most doctors think that colonoscopy is the best test to screen for colon cancer.

For the colonoscopy, the doctor will give you medicine to make you feel relaxed. Then they will put a thin tube with a camera and light on the end into your anus and up into the rectum and colon. Your doctor will look at the inside lining of the whole colon. During the procedure, your doctor might do a biopsy of a small piece of tissue from the colon and assess the tissue under a microscope. Your doctor might also remove growths that he or she sees in the colon. You will not feel it if the doctor takes a biopsy or removes a growth.

**PRE-PROCEDURE INSTRUCTIONS  
FOR COLONOSCOPY**

Your appointment is scheduled for:

**DAY:** \_\_\_\_\_ **DATE:** \_\_\_\_\_

**TIME:** \_\_\_\_\_ **ARRIVE AT:** \_\_\_\_\_

Welcome to the Tufts Medical Center GI Endoscopy Unit. We would like to make your stay as pleasant and safe as possible. **Please read all instructions carefully** before your procedure as they are critical to your health and safety. Failure to follow these directions may lead to a cancelled colonoscopy.

**WHAT TO EXPECT**

A colonoscopy is an examination of the colon (large intestine) with a flexible instrument called a colonoscope. The colonoscope has a light at the end of the device with a camera to allow direct visualization of the colon lining. A colonoscopy is performed to evaluate symptoms of diarrhea, constipation, rectal bleeding, lower abdominal pain, or to screen for colon cancer and colon polyps (growths in the colon). The colonoscopy is performed by a doctor (gastroenterologist) trained in endoscopy. The colonoscopy is performed after ingesting a laxative solution which will cleanse the colon. You will be given medication prior and during the procedure to make you comfortable. Most patients fall asleep or nap, and you will most likely have little or no awareness of the procedure.

**GETTING HERE**

*We are located on the third floor in the Proger building.*

**Plan to spend about three hours in our unit for your procedure.** We will do everything possible to avoid a delay, but emergencies may interrupt the schedule. Please arrive 60 minutes (1 hour) prior to the scheduled procedure time.

**WHAT TO BRING**

**When you arrive for your procedure, please bring:**

- 1) Photo ID
- 2) List of your current medications and allergies and your completed medical questionnaire
- 3) Insurance referral if required by your insurance company
- 4) Name, address, phone, and fax number for the doctor(s) you wish to receive a copy of the report
- 5) **Name and phone number of a responsible adult who will bring you home**

**LEAVE ALL VALUABLES AT HOME. Only bring items that you need.**

**Please arrange for an adult escort, 18 years or older, to take you home after the procedure. You will be receiving sedation, and you should not drive until the next day. Your escort does not have to come with you when you check in but MUST meet you in the Endoscopy Unit on Proger 3 when you are ready to go home. You are still required to have an adult escort, 18 years or older, if you plan to take the T, taxi,**

ride sharing service, **THE RIDE**, or are walking home. If you do not have an escort on the day of your procedure, your procedure will be **CANCELLED and RESCHEDULED**.

\*If you are above 60 years of age and need an escort home, volunteer escorts may be available if scheduled 2 weeks in advance.

## HOW TO PREPARE

### **NINE (9) DAYS before your procedure**

- **Buy clear liquids for your CLEAR LIQUID DIET.** The clear liquid diet starts the day before your procedure.

Drinking only clear liquids will be a required part of your procedure's preparation. A clear liquid is anything you can see through such as water, tea, black coffee, clear broth, apple juice, Gatorade, or Jell-O (not red!). **DO NOT DRINK** milk, cream, dairy products, alcohol (including white wine), or red/purple liquids during this diet.

- **Buy food for your LOW FIBER DIET.** The low fiber diet starts 5 days before your procedure.

This diet is 4 days long and starts 5 days before your procedure. On this diet, **you cannot eat corn, raw vegetables (for example: carrots, broccoli, lettuce, celery, cucumbers, etc.), SEEDS OR NUTS, or take fiber supplements (Metamucil).**

- **Buy items to make your prep easier:**  
**Baby wipes:** this can help with irritation.  
**Crystal Light (not red in color) or Ginger Ale:** this can make the preptaste better.
- If you **have constipation, take narcotic pain medications, or you previously had a colonoscopy and you were told that your colon was not well cleaned out**, your preparation for the procedure will require that you take a "PRE PREP" for 3 days with **MiraLax** before starting the prescription preparation from your doctor. This is very important for your procedure to be successful. Please purchase a bottle of **Miralax** (available over the counter) now to have ready.

### **EIGHT (8) DAYS before your procedure**

- If you take any **BLOOD THINNING MEDICATIONS OTHER THAN ASPIRIN** (for example: Coumadin (Warfarin), Eliquis, Pradaxa, Xarelto, Plavix, Brillinta, Lovenox), contact your primary care physician or heart doctor for instructions on if and when to stop these medications prior to your procedure. **ASPIRIN should be continued prior to the procedure.**
- If you have diabetes and take medication to control your blood sugar, contact your primary care physician or diabetes doctor for instructions about how to take your diabetes medication while preparing for the procedure.

### **FIVE (5) DAYS before your procedure:**

- Plan to purchase the colon preparation at the pharmacy. We will submit the prescription electronically to the pharmacy we have on file in your medical record.

- Please review and complete the medical questionnaire and medication list (see enclosed).
- Stop taking iron or multivitamins with iron. Iron may darken your stools.
- Start a low fiber diet TODAY. On this diet, **you cannot eat corn, raw vegetables (for example: carrots, broccoli, lettuce, celery, cucumbers, etc.), SEEDS OR NUTS, or take fiber supplements (Metamucil).**
- **If you have constipation or take narcotic pain medications, your “PRE PREP” with MiraLax (available over the counter), 1 scoop (17 grams) in 8 ounces of water twice daily for 3 days STARTS TOMORROW MORNING.**
- **If you have previously had a colonoscopy and you were told that your colon was not well cleaned out, your “PRE PREP” with MiraLax (available over the counter), 1 scoop (17 grams) in 8 ounces of water twice daily for 3 days STARTS TOMORROW MORNING.**

### **TWO (2) DAYS before your procedure:**

- 1) Be sure you have the colon preparation from your pharmacy.
- 2) Your treating physician has selected the bowel preparation most appropriate for your healthcare needs. Detailed information about these bowel preparations can be found by visiting the websites below:

**GOLYTELY / NULYTELY:** <http://www.nulytely.com/how-to-prepare.htm>

**MOVIPREP:** <https://moviprep.salix.com/about-moviprep/taking-moviprep>

**SUPREP:** <http://suprepkit.com/dose-instruction.htm>

**\*\*Please read the following bowel prep instructions carefully. You need to take all of the prep medication and follow the instructions carefully so that your bowels are clear for the colonoscopy. If your bowels are not clear, your colonoscopy procedure may need to be rescheduled to a later date and would require ANOTHER PREP.\*\***

### **ONE (1) DAY before your procedure:**

- 3) Follow the instructions given on this form. **DO NOT** follow instructions on prep bottles.
- 4) Begin a clear liquid diet for the entire day, **no solid food**. A clear liquid diet includes any liquids you can see through such as water, tea, black coffee, clear broth, apple juice, Gatorade, white grape juice, soda, Jell-O (not RED). **Do not drink anything RED.** Do not drink milk or dairy products.

### **YOUR BOWEL PREPARATION WILL FOLLOW A “SPLIT DOSE” SCHEDULE**

- 1) **Between 6pm-8pm the evening before procedure, drink the FIRST HALF** of the prescription colon laxative preparation.
- 2) **On the morning of your procedure, drink the SECOND HALF** of the prescription colon laxative preparation. **THIS HALF OF THE PREPARATION MUST BE FINISHED 2-4 HOURS BEFORE SCHEDULED PROCEDURE TIME** to avoid delay or cancellation of the procedure.

### **HELPFUL SUGGESTIONS FOR COLONOSCOPY PREPARATION**

- After mixing the preparation, place it in the refrigerator. Some patients feel it is easier to drink when it is cold.

- You can add Crystal Light (any color but red) or Ginger Ale to the preparation. Do not add anything else to the preparation.
- You can suck on lifesavers or hard candy (any color but red) between glasses of prep.
- Keep drinking the preparation even if you have not had a bowel movement.
- If you are not tolerating the prep well (nausea, vomiting), wait an hour then start again at a slower pace. If you still cannot tolerate the prep, please call. You may want to use a straw to sip the solution.
- Baby wipes can help irritation from repetitive bowel movements.

**ON THE DAY OF your procedure:**

- Take all of your usual medication with a sip of water, unless otherwise instructed by your primary care physician.
- **STOP CLEAR LIQUIDS 2-4 HOURS BEFORE YOUR PROCEDURE TIME. THEN, DO NOT EAT OR DRINK ANYTHING UNTIL AFTER YOUR PROCEDURE.**
- Your bowels **MUST** be empty to clearly view your colon and remove polyps.
- Please arrive 1 HOUR prior to the scheduled time.
- Wear loose fitting comfortable clothes.
- Remember “**WHAT TO BRING**” list (see page 1 of these instructions).

**AFTER your procedure:**

- You will be monitored in the Endoscopy Unit recovery area for approximately one hour.
- You will receive diet and medication instruction after your procedure.
- You may return to work the day after the procedure.
- Your escort **MUST** meet you in the Endoscopy Unit on Proger 3 when you are ready to go home.

**IF YOU ARE UNABLE TO KEEP YOUR APPOINTMENT, PLEASE CALL SCHEDULING AT (617) 636-0142 AT LEAST 48 HOURS AHEAD OF TIME TO RESCHEDULE.**