



Patient Information

How to prepare for your colonoscopy using Picolax bowel preparation

(Afternoon Appointment)

Introduction

Your Doctor has recommended that you have a colonoscopy to examine your colon (large bowel).

Colonoscopy - the inspection of your large bowel (colon) with a flexible camera (colonoscope).

Why do I need preparation?

The colonoscopy looks at the inside of the large bowel. To have a successful examination, the bowel must be empty and clean. If the bowel is not empty and clean, it is not possible to see clearly and this could mean the test needing to be repeated.

What is bowel preparation?

Picolax is a strong laxative which is supplied in a box containing two sachets. The two sachets contain a sugar free powder (Picolax) used to clear your bowel. The powder should be dissolved in cold water, in a heat resistant mug. When the powder dissolves, it will fizz and sometimes may become hot. Allow it to cool before drinking. The tablets are Senna tablets you will need to take six of these, they are also a laxative.

Before taking Picolax and Senna

Contact the Endoscopy department (0191 7371089) if you answer yes to any of the health questions and they were not discussed at your pre-assessment appointment.

- Are you allergic to any of the ingredients listed on the packets?
- Are you taking any of the following tablets?; **Warfarin, Acenocoumarol, Phenindione, Dabigatran, Apixaban, Rivaroxaban, Clopidogrel, Prasugrel, Ticagrelor**
- Are you a diabetic on insulin or tablets?
- Do you suffer from any kidney disease?
- Do you suffer from Phenylketonuria?

What can I expect of the bowel preparation?

The bowel preparation can begin to work within 3 hours of taking it but as everyone is different it may take longer to work. After you drink Picolax you will have lots of watery bowel movement, so stay near to a toilet because you may need to use it urgently.

Are there any side effects from bowel preparation?

You may experience headaches, nausea and sometimes vomiting. Abdominal bloating can occur and, less frequently, abdominal cramps. You are allowed to take Paracetamol unless advised otherwise. Most side effects are due to dehydration and can be avoided by drinking adequate amounts of fluid.

The skin around your bottom can become red and sore due to frequent diarrhoea. A barrier cream such as Vaseline or nappy rash preparations can protect the skin. The soreness is temporary and will disappear in a few days.

When do I start to prepare for my colonoscopy?

7 days before your examination

Stop taking iron tablets – Iron turns your stools black, this makes it difficult to see the lining of the bowel clearly.

4 days before your examination

Stop taking any medication that may cause you to be constipated, for example Lomotil, Loperamide or codeine phosphate.

Continue taking all other normal medication.

Special Instructions

Diet list – to be started 2 days before your procedure

Stop taking Fybogel or any other fibre products – The fibre content of these products will work against the special diet you are about to start.

Start your special diet at breakfast – Eat from the foods on the diet list unless you are allergic to or have been advised to avoid certain foods.

If you follow this diet your bowel will be empty and clean for your colonoscopy procedure. Do not eat any foods or have any drinks that are not on this diet list.

Do not have milk in any form.

Foods you can eat:

Meat: Lean meat for example chicken, turkey, beef, ham and rabbit.

Fish: White fish only (do not fry).

Eggs: Boiled, poached or scrambled – no milk to be used.

Vegetables: No vegetables other than potatoes, boiled or mashed only - no milk to be used.

Cereals: White rice or pasta, boiled only – no wholemeal varieties.

Bread: White bread and white bread rolls only – no wholemeal or brown bread.

Fats: A daily allowance of 25g (1oz) of butter or margarine.

Other: Plain jelly, rich tea biscuits, honey, golden syrup, white sugar, artificial sweeteners, boiled sweets and salt.

Clear Fluids: Black tea or coffee, fruit squash (not real fruit juice), marmite, oxo, Bovril, soda water, water, lemonade, Lucozade, herbal or fruit teas.

You must drink at least 1 glass of clear fluid hourly (during day time hours) from the start of the diet preparation, up until 2 hours before your procedure.

One day before your appointment

You are advised not to go to work on this day. You should expect frequent bowel motions within three hours of starting your bowel preparation. Some abdominal cramping is normal, stay within easy reach of the toilet.

Continue your diet from the diet sheet

Have a light breakfast of foods taken from yesterday's diet list.

At **12 midday** you may have a light lunch from the diet list. (This will be your last meal until after your examination).

Do not eat anything after 12 midday

Drink at least 1 glass of clear fluids every hour from the diet list.

At **2 pm** take all 6 Senna tablets with a drink of water.

If you take any oral medication, do not take it an hour either side of drinking your dose of PicoLax.

At **5pm** dissolve the contents of one of the sachets of bowel preparation in 200mls (8 fluid ozs) of cold water. Stir for 2 minutes and leave to stand for 30 minutes (the mixture may become hot and needs to cool). Once cooled, drink the solution.

What do I do on the morning of the colonoscopy?

Remember you are not allowed to eat anything until after your test

You may continue to take all your medications as normal

At **7 am** on the day of your examination dissolve the second sachet of bowel preparation as described above and drink the solution once cooled.

You are allowed to drink water until 2 hours before your appointment. You may receive sedation during your colonoscopy examination, it is important that you **stop drinking 2 hours before your appointment.**

Attend the Endoscopy unit at your appointed time.

If you require any further advice or information regarding your bowel preparation please contact:

TSS tel : - 0191 7371089 or 0191 7371070

Monday to Friday (9.00am to 5pm)

Data Protection

Any personal information is kept confidential. There may be occasions where your information needs to be shared with other care professionals to ensure you receive the best care possible. In order to assist us to improve the services available, your information may be used for clinical audit, research, teaching and anonymised for National NHS Reviews

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