

Information for You from Your Health Care Team

Colonoscopy Preparation – Frequently Asked Questions

1. Is there any way that I can make this taste any better?

You can try sucking on hard candy. You can rinse your mouth with water or a mouthwash. Do not eat or drink anything while you are drinking the solution.

2. Why avoid red liquids?

The red color can persist in the colon and potentially look like blood.

3. One of the medications I was instructed to take the morning of my procedure is red. Can I take it?

Medications for blood pressure, heart conditions, and seizures should be taken the morning of your exam regardless of the color.

4. I feel like vomiting and don't think I can drink anymore. What should I do?

Stop for 30 to 40 minutes until the feeling of nausea has subsided. Restart the solution with longer intervals between the glassfuls. It is very important that you continue drinking the solution because without a clean bowel, the doctor won't be able to see the inside of your colon to complete the examination. If you vomit, wait 45 minutes and begin solution again. If not improved call the GI Fellow on call at (315) 464-5540.

5. I drank a lot of the solution and haven't gone to the bathroom yet. What should I do?

Keep drinking. Most people have a bowel movement after an hour, but some patients may take 2 hours or longer.

6. I am taking the prep and am now having loose, watery stools. Do I still need the rest of the prep?

Yes, you may have solid stool higher in the colon that needs to be eliminated.

7. I already have diarrhea before taking the prep, do I still have to take the preparation?

Yes, you must take the prep as directed by your physician. Your colon is approximately 6 feet long and must be emptied completely for your physician to see the colon clearly.

8. I see yellow color in the toilet bowl and a few flecks. What do I do?

If you drank the entire solution and your last bowel movements were clear enough to see the bottom of the toilet, you should be fine. It is OK if you have some flecks of material. The yellow color is a result of bile that normally colors the feces.

9. My bottom is so sore. What can I do?

To clean the area, avoid rubbing. Gently pat with a wet washcloth. Apply Vaseline® or Desitin® liberally to the rectal area.

10. Can I drink alcoholic beverages?

We strongly suggest you do not drink any alcoholic beverages prior to your procedure since they can cause dehydration.

11. Can I chew gum or suck candy?

Yes, but nothing with soft centers or red color.

12. Can I brush my teeth?

Of course.

13. Can I wear my dentures?

Yes, you may wear your dentures to the endoscopy suite, however, you may be asked to remove them prior to the procedure.

14. Can I have chicken soup?

You can have only the broth, no noodles, chicken, or vegetables.

15. Can I have the colonoscopy done if I am having my menstrual period?

Yes, the procedure can still be performed.