



Winchester
District
Memorial
Hospital

BOWEL PREPARATION – using PEG 4-litre laxative

A colonoscopy is a test that lets the doctor look inside your bowel to check for colon cancer or polyps. (See “Frequent questions and answers” section.)

Please read all these instructions at least one week before your test date. If you have any questions, please call your endoscopists office.

- You must not drive yourself home after the test. A responsible adult must take you home.
- If you do not have a ride home, the test will be cancelled or could be done without the drugs that make you feel relaxed and sleepy (which is called ‘sedation’).
- Although very rare, you might have a severe reaction while you prepare for your test. If you have severe pain in your stomach, vomiting that won’t stop, feel like fainting or have fainted, please call 911.
- Bring your health card to the test.
- Leave jewelry and valuables at home.
- The Winchester District Memorial Hospital is a scent-free place. Please do not wear scents.

- If you cancel your appointment without giving us enough notice, we can’t book another patient into that time slot. If you need to cancel or change your appointment, please contact WDMH’s booking office, 613-774-2420 ext. 6317, **at least 5 working days** before your appointment so that we can book someone else. If you cancel with less than 5 working days’ notice, or if you do not show up, your test will **NOT** automatically be rebooked, and you may be billed directly for the cancelled procedure.

Make sure your endoscopist’s office knows if there are changes to any of the following, as it may affect your colonoscopy.

- **Medications you take including blood thinners** (such as Pradax, Xarelto, Eliquis)
- Health problems including, diabetes, obstructive sleep apnea (and require CPAP), kidney disease, liver disease, heart failure or if you take any blood-thinners (such as Coumadin, Pradax, Xarelto, Eliquis).
- If you are allergic to any drugs.

- If you have any other major health problems.

Why you should prepare for the test

The best way to make sure your test is a success is to properly prepare for it. You must clean out your bowel (also called 'colon' or 'intestines') so the doctor can clearly see the bowel lining and find anything that's not normal. A clean bowel also helps the doctor do the test effectively and safely. Not preparing your bowel well means the doctor might miss seeing cancers or polyps, and you may have to have the test again.

- You will prepare your bowel using a PEG-based laxative. A laxative is a drug that makes you have bowel movements, often diarrhea. PEG-based laxatives are powerful. They are sold under different names, such as CoLyte, PegLyte and GoLYTELY.
- People react to laxatives in different ways. You may begin to have bowel movements within one hour or it may take up to 4 hours.

Several days before your test, you will need to buy:

- One package of CoLyte, PegLyte or GoLYTELY – enough to mix up 4 Litres of laxative
- Clear fluids that you like, for example:
 - Sport drinks – Gatorade or Powerade (not diet drinks)

- Clear pulp-free fruit juices (apple, white grape, white cranberry, lemonade)
- Clear soups (broth or bouillon)
- Kool-Aid, iced tea, Popsicles made with juice, Jell-O, ginger ale, 7-Up, Sprite
- Tea or coffee without milk products or substitutes
- Do not buy any drinks, Popsicles or Jell-O that are red, or contain red dye. Red stains the bowel and looks like blood.
- Everything that you drink must contain salt and/or calories to avoid the very rare risk of a seizures (no water or alcohol).
- Zinc oxide ointment, petroleum jelly and baby wipes (optional). These will reduce irritation around your backside (anus).

What to eat and not to eat before your test

Starting 4 days before your test you must carefully watch what food you eat.

If you are not sure whether a food is safe to eat, then do not eat it.

Stop taking all fibre supplements 4 days before your test.

Please follow this list of food that are OK:

- ✓ White bread or toast
- ✓ White rice
- ✓ White pasta

- ✓ Dairy products (yogurt, milk, cheese)
- ✓ Eggs
- ✓ Chicken, beef, pork, fish
- ✓ Cooked vegetables
- ✓ Canned fruits

Please do **not** eat the following foods:

- ✗ Whole grain bread or whole grain cereals or whole grain pasta
- ✗ Brown or wild rice
- ✗ Oatmeal
- ✗ Raw fruits or berries of any kind
- ✗ Raw vegetables
- ✗ Nuts or seeds
- ✗ Food containing any nuts or seeds
- ✗ Popcorn

A note about seeds: Seeds and roughage are important parts of a healthy diet. However, do not eat them within 4 days of your test because they block the colonoscope (the flexible tube used during the test). We may have to stop the test and repeat it later if it gets blocked.

Tips for drinking CoLyte, PegLyte or GoLYTELY:

- You can either keep the mixture in the fridge, so it is cold, or leave it on the counter and drink it at room temperature.
- Drink the mixture through a straw placed far back in your mouth, so you don't taste it as much.
- **Do not** mix the laxative powder with anything but water. After you've prepared the mixture, you may add

juice or crystal light to change the flavor

- If you feel sick to your stomach, you may take Gravol (an anti-nausea medicine). Take 25 or 50 mg every 4 to 6 hours as you need it. You can buy Gravol at any drug store without a prescription.
- You may chew gum the day before the test, but do not swallow the gum! Do not chew gum on the day of the test.

It is important that you drink the entire bottle of Golyetly, as instructed and drink enough clear fluids to prevent dehydration. A drink like Gatorade or Powerade is best. If you become dehydrated, you may get weak, dizzy or light-headed, which can increase your chance of fainting or falling. It is best to have a responsible adult with you or nearby while you prepare for your test.

The day before your test

1. Eat a light breakfast (toast, tea, coffee, juice).
2. Mix the CoLyte (or PegLyte or GoLYTELY) following the instructions on the package. Do this early in the morning. Put the mixture in the fridge or leave on counter.
3. Drink at least 500 ml of clear liquids per hour after breakfast. Solid foods, milk, milk products and alcohol are not allowed until after your test is done.
4. **At 5 p.m.: start drinking 3 liters of GoLyte. Finish by 7 p.m.** Drink 250

ml every 10 minutes, until you have finished the first 3 litres.

5. Drink 1L Gatorade quickly
6. Continue to drink clear liquids, 125 ml, until you go to bed.

On the day of your test

1. 5 hours before your arrival time, start drinking at least 500 ml of clear liquid per hour.
2. **4 hours before your arrival time: Drink the last 1-litre dose of GoLyteLy quickly.** Try to finish in 10min.
3. You will have many watery bowel movements and some cramps.
4. Take your usual medicine with a sip of water (especially your blood pressure and cardiac medicine) unless specific changes were made in preparation for your colonoscopy.
5. 3 hours before your arrival time stop drinking all fluids. Do not take anything by mouth from now on, including candy or gum.

What will happen on the day of your test?

- When you get to the hospital, you must register first. Please go to the 2nd floor day surgery desk at the time you have been given. You will be called with your arrival time 48h before.
- Once you are admitted to the unit, you will change into a patient gown and lie down on a stretcher. The nurse will confirm your current

medicines and allergies and check your blood pressure and pulse.

- A needle will be inserted into a vein in your hand or arm.
- The nurse will ask about how well you prepared your bowel. If your bowel is not completely clean, you may have to have an enema.
- You will be taken into the room where the test is done.
- The doctor will meet with you and answer any questions you have prior to receiving any sedation
- You will receive medicine to make you sleepy and relaxed and to reduce any discomfort. Some patients may fall asleep during the test but can wake up easily and follow commands. This is called 'sedation,' which means you can breathe without any machines.
- The colonoscope is then inserted and passed through the bowel. You may feel some minor discomfort or cramps because air goes into the bowel during the test. However, most patients feel okay.
- After the test, you will go to the recovery room.
- Before you go home, the nurse or doctor will review the results of your test with you and let you know what to do next.
- Plan on being in the hospital for approximately 3-4 hours.
- Once you get home, let your doctor know if you get severe stomach pain, or fever, or if you pass blood from your backside (anus).

- If you can't reach your doctor, go to the nearest Emergency Department if you are worried about how severe your symptoms are.

You are considered legally impaired for 24 hours after the test because you have had a sedative (the drug that makes you feel sleepy). You must not drive for 24 hours. A responsible adult must take you home from the test.

Frequent questions and answers

What is a colonoscopy?

A colonoscopy is a test that allows a doctor to see and examine the lining of your intestines, which includes the rectum (also called anus, backside or bum) and the colon (also called the large intestine or large bowel). The doctor uses a flexible tube called a colonoscope.

Why is it done?

This test lets the doctor diagnose your condition and decide how to treat it. If needed, biopsies (removing a small amount of tissue) can be taken and looked at under the microscope. The test can find and treat problems such as:

- Bleeding, or find the cause of anemia
- Change of bowel patterns, such as diarrhea or constipation
- Abdominal pain
- Bowel polyps or cancer. (If they are found, polyps can be removed and/or biopsies taken.)

- Crohn's disease or Ulcerative colitis
- Narrowing in the colon

What does 'sedation' mean?

Sedation is a mix of drugs that makes you feel relaxed and sleepy. The drugs are given when you have a short medical procedure such as a colonoscopy. Patients usually sleep through the test.

What is a polypectomy?

'Polypectomy' means removing a polyp. During the test, a polyp may be found. Polyps are growths of tissue that vary in size, from a few millimetres to several centimetres. If your doctor feels that it's needed, he or she will use a wire loop to remove the polyp from the bowel wall. You should feel no pain.

What happens after the test?

You will be observed in the Endoscopy Unit until the effects of the drugs have worn off. Recovery time is different for each person but varies between 30 and 60 minutes. You may feel bloated because some air gets into the bowel during the test. You will be able to resume your usual diet after the test unless the doctor or nurse tells you not to.

Are there any risks from a colonoscopy or polypectomy?

Colonoscopy and polypectomy are safe and have very low risk when done by doctors who have been trained. One possible risk is perforation. A perforation

is a tear through the bowel wall, which may allow intestinal fluids to leak. This rarely happens – in less than 0.1% of patients. If it does, surgery may be needed, but in some cases, antibiotics and intravenous (IV) fluids can be used instead. Another risk is bleeding from the spot where a biopsy was taken, or a polyp removed. It is usually minor and will stop on its own. In rare cases, blood transfusions or surgery may be needed.

At the spot where the IV medicine goes into your hand or arm, your vein may get red or itchy. You may get a tender lump that stays for a few weeks or months, but it will go away. You may also react to the drugs. Other diseases you have may present risks, such as heart attacks or strokes. Death is very, very rare, but remains a remote risk.

Lastly, no medical test is perfect. Sometimes, polyps or cancers can be missed.

Notes about your colonoscopy

Your colonoscopy will take place in Day Surgery, which is on the 2nd floor of the Winchester District Memorial Hospital

Date of colonoscopy:

Arrive at:
