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## Endoscopy WG – Colonoscopy FAQs

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Number	Question	Answer
1	Do I really need to do the preparation in the middle of the night?	Yes, typically it's recommended to start the preparation in the evening before your procedure to ensure your colon is thoroughly cleaned out. This will often continue into the night.
2	How long does the prep take to kick in?	The timing can vary, but usually, it takes a few hours for the preparation to start working and for bowel movements to occur.
3	What is considered a clear liquid diet?	<p>A clear liquid diet consists of transparent liquids that are easy to digest and leave little to no residue in the digestive tract. Examples of clear liquids include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Water</li> <li>2. Clear broth (such as chicken or beef broth)</li> <li>3. Clear fruit juices without pulp (such as apple or grape juice)</li> <li>4. Sports drinks without artificial coloring</li> <li>5. Clear Gelato without fruit or toppings (e.g. lemon, grapefruit, etc.)</li> <li>6. Clear popsicles</li> <li>7. Black coffee or tea without milk or cream</li> <li>8. Clear sodas (such as ginger ale or lemon-lime soda)</li> </ol> <p>It's important to avoid liquids that are not transparent or contain solid particles, as they may interfere with the colonoscopy procedure or the bowel preparation process.</p>
4	Can I just take public transportation or a taxi/Uber home?	No. You will be sedated (made sleepy) for the test and, therefore, someone must drive you home. You will not be allowed to take a taxi/Uber or bus unless accompanied by someone. You cannot walk home after the procedure. You will be rescheduled if you have no ride or don't have someone to accompany you home.
5	Should I take my diabetic medication?	Follow your healthcare provider's instructions regarding your diabetic medication. You may receive specific guidance on adjusting your medication regimen before the procedure.
6	Can I take my regular medication on the morning of the procedure?	<p>Whether you can take your regular medication the day of your colonoscopy depends on the specific medication and your medical condition. Here are some general guidelines:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>Essential Medications:</b> medications for conditions such as heart disease, high blood pressure and seizures are usually allowed. These should be taken with a small sip of water unless your doctor advises otherwise.</li> <li>2. <b>Diabetes Medications:</b> if you take insulin or other medications for diabetes, you may need to adjust the dose since you will be fasting. Consult your doctor for specific instructions.</li> <li>3. <b>Blood Thinners:</b> medications such as warfarin, aspirin, clopidogrel, and other anticoagulants or antiplatelet agents may need to be stopped several days before the procedure to reduce the risk of bleeding. Your doctor will provide specific guidance based on your risk factors and medical history.</li> </ol>

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		<p>4. <b>Iron Supplements:</b> these are typically stopped a few days before the procedure because they can darken the stool and make it harder to see during the colonoscopy.</p> <p>5. <b>NSAIDs and Anti-inflammatory Drugs:</b> you may be advised to stop non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs like ibuprofen or naproxen a few days before the procedure.</p> <p>6. <b>Other Medications:</b> for any other medications not listed here, it's best to check with your doctor.</p> <p>Please bring a list of your current medications, or the medication(s) itself, to your appointment.</p>
7	What type of sedation will I receive?	The type of sedation used during a colonoscopy varies but often includes a combination of a sedative and pain medication administered intravenously to keep you relaxed and comfortable.
8	Why can't I drive or go home alone?	Sedation can impair your coordination, reflexes, and judgment, so it's unsafe to drive or go home alone after the procedure. A responsible adult must accompany you.
9	Is the colonoscopy painful?	While discomfort can vary from person to person, a colonoscopy is typically not considered a painful procedure. Before the colonoscopy begins, you will be given sedation to help you relax and alleviate any discomfort. During the procedure, you may feel some pressure or mild discomfort as the scope is inserted and moved through your colon, but it should not be painful. If you experience any discomfort, be sure to communicate with your healthcare provider, who can adjust the sedation or take other measures to ensure your comfort. Overall, many people find that the sedation makes the procedure quite tolerable.
10	Will I be awake for this procedure?	You may be awake but sedated during the procedure. Some people even fall asleep due to the effects of sedation. More medication can be given to ensure that you are comfortable.
11	11. Can a colonoscopy be done while I am menstruating? 32. Can a colonoscopy be done while I am menstruating?	Yes, a colonoscopy can be performed while you're menstruating. Inform your healthcare provider beforehand.
12	Do I have to remove nail polish?	Light colours are okay. Do not wear black or dark nail polish.
13	Can I have a light breakfast?	Generally, you'll be instructed to avoid solid foods the day before the procedure and switch to a clear liquid diet. Please review the bowel preparation instructions provided as some protocols will allow you to have a light breakfast.

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14	Can I drink smaller amounts of the bowel prep, or can I take a pill instead?	<p>It's crucial to follow the specific instructions provided by your healthcare provider regarding bowel preparation for your colonoscopy. In most cases, drinking the full amount of the bowel prep solution is necessary to ensure thorough cleansing of the colon and accurate results during the procedure. Taking smaller amounts of the prep solution or substituting it with pills may not adequately cleanse the colon, which could impact the quality of the examination and increase the likelihood of having to repeat the procedure.</p> <p>If you have concerns about the bowel prep or have trouble tolerating the solution, discuss your options with your healthcare provider. They may be able to provide alternative solutions or adjust the regimen to better suit your needs while still ensuring effective preparation for the colonoscopy.</p>
15	How long will the procedure take?	There are several factors that affect the length of time it takes to do a colonoscopy, including the reason you are having it and planned removal of large polyps. All times are estimates, but 15-30 minutes is average for the procedure. If you are having a large polyp removed it can be 60 minutes or longer. You will have registration and recovery time as well. Please expect to be at the hospital for 2-4 hours.
16	What if I am still passing stool before the colonoscopy?	<p>If you are still passing stool before your scheduled colonoscopy, don't be alarmed. It's normal for bowel movements to continue during the preparation process, especially in the hours leading up to the procedure. The purpose of the bowel prep is to thoroughly cleanse the colon, and it's common for bowel movements to persist until shortly before the procedure.</p> <p>Continue following the instructions provided by your healthcare provider for the bowel prep, including any dietary restrictions and the timing of when to stop eating and drinking. If you have specific concerns or questions about your bowel movements or the preparation process, don't hesitate to reach out to your healthcare provider for guidance and reassurance. They can address any concerns you may have and ensure that you are adequately prepared for the colonoscopy.</p>
17	When can I return to work or normal activities?	You can usually resume normal activities the day after the procedure. Avoid strenuous activities and heavy lifting for the remainder of the day.
18	Can I chew gum?	Yes, you can typically chew gum while following a clear liquid diet before your colonoscopy.
19	Can I smoke cigarettes or marijuana?	Smoking, including marijuana, can have adverse effects on your health and may interfere with the sedation and recovery process. It's generally recommended to refrain from smoking before and after the procedure.
20	Can I have water the morning of my procedure?	<p>Stop drinking water and other liquids for 2 hours before the procedure.</p> <p><b>Are you having a General Anesthetic?</b> If yes, you must follow the instructions from anesthesia and your physician regarding fasting.</p>

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21	When can I eat after my procedure?	You can usually start with clear liquids after the procedure and gradually progress to solid foods as tolerated. Instructions will be provided to you after your procedure.
22	What should I do if the preparation makes me nauseous?	If you experience nausea during the preparation process, try taking the prep solution at a slower pace or ask your healthcare provider if there are alternative options available to help manage nausea. You can also take anti-nausea medications such as Gravol.
23	I'm coming in for diarrhea. Do I still have to drink the prep?	Yes, even if you are experiencing diarrhea, it's typically necessary to follow the bowel preparation instructions provided by your healthcare provider before your colonoscopy. The purpose of the bowel prep is to thoroughly cleanse the colon, regardless of your current bowel habits.
24	If it looks like I am cleared out, do I still have to finish the prep?	Yes, it's important to complete the full prep regimen as prescribed by your healthcare provider to ensure thorough cleansing of the colon for accurate results.
25	Is sedation safe to have if I have severe sleep apnea?	Your healthcare provider will evaluate your medical history, including sleep apnea, to determine the appropriate sedation method for you. If you have a C-PAP machine, please bring it with you.
26	Can I have a prescription for the bowel preparation?	Your healthcare provider can prescribe a specific bowel preparation regimen tailored to your individual needs. However, please note that some medical insurance plans do not cover the cost of bowel preparation.
27	I'm pregnant, can I still come in to do my procedure?	Inform your healthcare provider if you're pregnant before scheduling a colonoscopy. They will assess the risks and benefits and determine the best course of action for you and your baby.
28	If I don't have a ride home, can I wait in the waiting area until I feel better to go home?	It's important to arrange for a responsible adult to accompany you home after the procedure. Waiting in the facility's waiting area without supervision is not an option.
29	I forgot to stop my iron supplement, can I still come to the colonoscopy appointment?	Yes, you can still come for the procedure. Please inform the healthcare provider when you arrive for your procedure that you forgot to stop your supplements.
30	I forgot to stop my blood thinner, can I still come to the colonoscopy appointment?	<p>If you forgot to stop your blood thinner medication before your colonoscopy appointment, it's essential to inform your physician as soon as possible. Blood thinners can increase the risk of bleeding during and after the procedure, so your healthcare provider needs to be aware of any medications you're taking that could affect the procedure.</p> <p>Depending on the circumstances, your healthcare provider may proceed with the colonoscopy as planned, adjust the procedure, or reschedule it later. They may also provide specific instructions on managing your blood thinner medication before and after the procedure to minimize any potential risks.</p>
31	If I come in sooner than check-in time, can I be seen sooner?	No. Please come to your appointment at the scheduled time. Early arrivals will not be seen sooner.
32	If my colonoscopy instructions are asking me for the prep 4 hours before	Follow the instructions provided by your healthcare provider for each procedure. If there are conflicting instructions, contact your healthcare provider for clarification.

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Number	Question	Answer
	coming, but my gastroscopy is saying not to have anything to drink before that, what should I do?	
33	Is it okay if my family/friend is in the room with me during my procedure? I have anxiety and feel better if they will be in the room with me.	For safety and privacy reasons, family members or friends are not allowed in the procedure room. It's important to discuss your anxiety with your healthcare provider. They can offer alternative ways to help manage your anxiety and ensure you feel supported throughout the process.
34	Can I stay on a clear liquid diet for several days instead of taking laxatives/prep solutions?	It's essential to follow the specific prep instructions provided by your healthcare provider to ensure your colon is adequately cleansed for the procedure. A clear liquid diet alone may not be sufficient to achieve the necessary cleansing.
35	What is considered a low-residue diet and why can't I eat seeds/nuts before my scope?	A low-residue diet consists of foods that are low in fiber and easy to digest, such as white bread, rice, pasta, and cooked vegetables without skins. Avoiding seeds and nuts helps prevent residue in the colon, which could interfere with the visualization during the scope.
36	What should I expect after my procedure? Is it safe to drive the next day?	After the procedure, you may experience some bloating, gas, or mild discomfort. It's generally safe to drive the next day, but it's important to follow any specific instructions provided by your healthcare provider regarding driving or operating machinery after sedation.
37	How does my extensive commute affect my prep timing?	If you have an extensive commute, plan accordingly to ensure you have enough time to complete the prep regimen before leaving for your appointment. You may need to adjust the timing of your prep to accommodate for travel time.
38	I can't do the preparation on my own, can I be pre-admitted to the hospital for my scope?	If you're unable to complete the prep on your own, discuss your concerns with your healthcare provider. They may be able to provide alternative options or make arrangements for you to receive assistance with the prep.
39	My rectal bleeding/symptoms have gotten worse due to the prep, can I still come in?	If you experience worsening symptoms or complications during the prep process, contact your healthcare provider immediately for further guidance. They will assess your condition and determine the best course of action.
40	Why do I need a consultation before my procedure?	A consultation before the procedure allows your healthcare provider to review your medical history, discuss the procedure, and address any concerns or questions you may have. It also helps ensure that you're adequately prepared for the procedure and that any necessary pre-procedure tests or evaluations are completed.