

Colonoscopy FAQ's

Spectrum Health Medical Group Digestive Health Services

Why do I have to avoid red, blue, and purple liquids?	The red, blue, and purple artificial dye stains the lining of the colon and can be mistaken for blood and hide polyps.
One of the medications I was instructed to take the morning of my procedure is red. Can this medication be taken?	Medications for blood pressure, heart medications, seizure medications, and steroids (even if red) should be taken the morning of your procedure with a small sip of water. Wait to take your remaining medications until after your procedure.
I feel like vomiting and I don't think I can drink anymore of my prep. What should I do?	It is important to continue to take the prep if possible. Without a clean bowel, the doctor may not be able to complete the procedure. If you do vomit, wait 15 minutes and begin drinking the solution again.
I drank a lot of the solution and have not gone to the bathroom yet. What should I do?	Keep drinking the preparation/solution. Most patients have a bowel movement after an hour, some may take longer.
I am taking the preparation and am having loose, watery stools. Do I need to drink the rest of the preparation?	Yes, there may be stool higher in the colon that needs to be eliminated.
I had diarrhea before starting the prep. Do I still need to take the prep?	Yes, you need to take the prep as directed. Your colon is 3 –5 feet long and the entire colon needs to be cleaned out for the doctor to see the colon clearly.
My bottom is sore. What can I do?	You can use Preparation H, Desitin, Vaseline or similar product. Avoid rubbing the area and gently pat dry.
May I chew gum or suck on candy?	Yes, but nothing with soft centers or red, blue, or purple in color.
May I have a colonoscopy done if I am having a menstrual period?	Yes, your procedure can still be performed.
What if I do not bring a driver to the procedure?	You will need to reschedule your procedure to a time when you will have a driver available.
Why do I need to avoid high fiber foods and foods with seeds and nuts 5 days before my procedure?	High fiber foods contain digestive residue resistant to being flushed out. Nuts and seeds may also contain dense components which may be difficult to eliminate.
Is there anything I can do to make the prep taste better?	You can try sucking on hard candy or drinking the prep through a straw. You can also rinse your mouth with water or mouthwash.
Can I wear contacts and dentures?	Yes, you can wear your contacts and you can wear your dentures unless you are also having an upper scope done.
May I drink alcoholic beverages?	We strongly suggest that you do not drink alcoholic beverages prior to your procedure.