



## COVID-19 2026 NOTICE

If you have a fever, unexplained cough, or respiratory symptoms or have been exposed to someone with symptoms or a confirmed COVID-19 infection in the last four weeks, call and reschedule your colonoscopy procedure. Don't do the prep and risk being turned away.



## MIRALAX-GATORADE-DULCOLAX COLONOSCOPY Split "PREP"



Modern colonoscopy is a diagnostic procedure that examines the colon or large intestine. Over the past 40 years, it has become the gold standard for screening colon polyps and preventing colorectal cancer. Most exams are quick, painless, and very safe, thanks to modern sedation methods and newer, thinner, flexible instruments. However, to ensure an accurate and safe exam, your colon must be cleared of all waste material using a restricted diet and laxative preparation, often referred to as "prep." A colonoscopy is an important exam. Please read this carefully and take the time to prepare properly. REMEMBER: An accurate exam requires an excellent prep. THE MIRALAX PREP is a relatively inexpensive and effective option, but you must follow the instructions closely.

Most patients report that the worst part of the procedure is not the colonoscopy but the necessary preparation the day before. Preparing for a colonoscopy is never pleasant, but fortunately, new low-volume "preps" such as this have been developed to make this process as simple as possible. You must follow all instructions carefully so that the test does not need to be rescheduled. If you have any questions, please call our office at (412) 262-1000 option #4.

**WARNING:** Individuals taking the semaglutide class of medications known as (GLP-1) receptor agonists may delay how their stomach empties. This may interfere with colonoscopy preparation AND increase the risk of aspiration under anesthesia for BOTH colonoscopy and upper endoscopy (EGD) exams.

ALL patients taking these medications once weekly MUST stop them temporarily for 1 week before their procedure appointment.

ALL patients taking these medications daily MUST stop them temporarily for 24 hours before their procedure appointment.

Failure to do so will result in the cancellation of the procedure, which will have to be rescheduled.



To prepare for your exam, you will need to purchase:

- MiraLAX (or any brand of polyethylene glycol 3350): One 238-gram bottle
- Gatorade (or another clear sports drink): 64 ounces (no red, purple, or blue)
- Dulcolax (bisacodyl) tablets: 4 tablets (5 mg each)
- A small bottle of Milk of Magnesia (if you suffer from constipation)

All bowel preps may cause some anal irritation. We also recommend that you purchase:

- A soft brand of toilet tissue.
- A box of baby wipes such as Huggies or Pampers Aloe wipes

## **Special Instruction for Diabetics (READ LAST PAGE)**

We realize our patients with diabetes may be wondering about the safety of a colonoscopy prep. The bottom line is it can be done safely if you follow instructions. If you are taking medication for Diabetes, please read last page for special instructions.

## **NOTE: SPLIT PREP INTO TWO HALVES**

**The Miralax prep is split into TWO portions:**

1. The first half is taken the night before your exam.
2. The second half must be taken on the morning of your exam, STARTING 5 HOURS BEFORE YOUR ARRIVAL TIME and completed within 1 hour.

Why a split prep? A few decades ago, it was realized that when patients took all of the prep the night before the exam, the right colon was often obscured by liver and gallbladder bile that had trickled down the small intestine overnight. This made the examination of the right colon less accurate. By taking half of the prep the morning of the exam, the right colon is now clean and shiny, resulting in a more accurate exam.

## **THREE (3) DAYS BEFORE YOUR COLONOSCOPY**

- Read and review these instructions.
- Make sure you understand what is to be done and when.
- Gather all supplies mentioned above.
- Arrange for a companion to accompany you to your appointment and drive you home. If possible, this person should be someone with whom we can share the examination results. **We require that your driver stay here for the entire duration, which averages around two hours; otherwise, your appointment may need to be rescheduled.**
- It is best to eat lightly for a few days before your exam. This will make the cleanout easier and more effective. *What goes in, has to come out.* Try to avoid overeating to compensate for the upcoming fast. Please avoid Metamucil, vitamins containing iron, raw vegetables, corn, sesame seeds, and foods with skin or small seeds, such as tomatoes, kiwis, and cucumbers, for a few days before your exam. Also, discontinue any fiber supplements. (Metamucil, Benefiber, Citrucel, etc.)

## **TWO (2) DAYS BEFORE YOUR COLONOSCOPY**

- Maintain regular activity and a low-fiber diet, but avoid overeating.
- Stay hydrated by drinking plenty of water.
- IF CONSTIPATED: Don't go into the prep constipated. If you feel this might be the case, we recommend taking 4 tablespoons of Milk of Magnesia with 4 glasses of water after dinner two nights before your exam to "prime the pump."

## **ONE (1) DAY BEFORE YOUR COLONOSCOPY ("Prep Day")**

Follow these instructions the day *before* your procedure:

**AM. NO SOLID FOOD.** Upon waking, avoid solid food. Only a CLEAR LIQUID DIET should be maintained until your exam is finished. Consume only transparent liquids, such as water, clear broth, black coffee, pulp-free juice and popsicles, and light-colored sports drinks. Aim to drink at least 8 oz of clear fluids every two hours while awake. **Avoid red, purple, or blue-colored liquids. No alcohol allowed.**

TIP: (I purchase several orders of take-out Won-Ton soup, strain and enjoy the warm broth during the prep, and save the Won-Tons for the next day - Dr. Fusco.)



**NOON. NO SOLID FOOD.**

Take 4 Dulcolax tablets with water.

Drink at least 8 oz of clear fluids every two hours.

Mix MiraLAX with Gatorade. Pour the entire 238-gram bottle of MiraLAX into 64 ounces of Gatorade. Stir or shake until the powder is completely dissolved. Chill it in the fridge if you prefer it cold. **NO SOLID FOOD. ONLY clear liquids.**

**6 PM. BEGIN THE PREP;**

Plan for Comfort: Wear loose, comfortable clothing and have books, music, or shows prepared, as you may spend a considerable amount of time in the bathroom.

Start Drinking the MiraLAX–Gatorade Mixture

Drink the 1<sup>st</sup> half of the solution.

Drink 8 ounces of the mixture every 15 minutes. Do this 4 times = 32 oz.

Use a straw if that helps with the taste.

Stay Hydrated. While you're taking the MiraLAX–Gatorade solution, keep sipping on other clear liquids (water, broth, etc.) to avoid dehydration.

Remain near bathroom facilities

## **DAY OF COLONOSCOPY (“Test Day”)**

Do NOT eat breakfast. NO SOLID FOOD

**5 hours before your ARRIVAL TIME.** Wake up 5-6 hours before your appointment.

Start Drinking the MiraLAX–Gatorade Mixture

Drink the 2<sup>nd</sup> half of the solution.

Drink 8 ounces of the mixture every 15 minutes. Do this 4 times = 32 oz.

To prevent aspiration of stomach contents into your lungs while under the anesthetic, **YOU MUST HAVE NOTHING BY MOUTH THOSE LAST FOUR HOURS BEFORE YOUR EXAM – NO FOOD, LIQUIDS INCLUDING WATER, TOBACCO, CANDY, OR EVEN CHEWING GUM – OTHERWISE YOUR EXAM MAY BE CANCELLED.**

## YOUR DRIVER

***Bring a driver who can remain here the entire time you are here.*** The average visit is about two hours. Arriving late or without a driver may require canceling and rescheduling your procedure. *Patients who would like to have their driver come to recovery after their procedure must have their driver remain in the waiting room the entire time.* If the nurse comes to the waiting room to call your driver back and they have left the waiting room, they may miss the opportunity to come to recovery when the doctor goes over the results.

## MEDICATIONS

You may take any essential prescription medications with a **small** sip of water, especially those for high blood pressure. (Diabetic medications and blood thinners such as Coumadin, warfarin, Pradaxa, Xarelto, and Eliquis have specific instructions. Please consult your doctor.) If you use any asthma inhalers, even occasionally, please remember to bring them with you.

## WHAT TO EXPECT

- Don't expect to get much sleep.
- Frequent Bathroom Trips: Once the laxatives start working, you'll have multiple bowel movements, which become very watery. Stay close to a restroom.
- Mild Discomfort: You might feel bloating or cramps, which is normal. Walking around or gently massaging your abdomen can help.
- Hydration is Key: Drink plenty of clear liquids before the final cutoff time to prevent dehydration.
- Color of Bowel Movements: Ideally, your stool should be yellowish and clear like urine before your exam.

## CALL YOUR DOCTOR IF

- You have severe abdominal pain or cramping.
- You can't stop vomiting or can't keep fluids down.
- You show signs of dehydration (dizziness, fast heartbeat, very little urination).
- The prep does not seem effective.
- You have any concerns that feel urgent or unusual.
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## ARRIVE ON TIME

Plan to arrive ON TIME for your appointment. Wear comfortable clothing and shoes that are easily removed. Leave jewelry and other valuables at home. No firearms are permitted. Bring your insurance card and driver's license. If there is a copay or deductible, be prepared to pay it PRIOR to your procedure. **NOTE: Three Rivers Endoscopy Center is not responsible for personal belongings that are lost, stolen, damaged, or left on the premises. Please leave your cell phone, headphones, etc. with your driver or leave them at home.**

## JUDGING YOUR PREP

You can judge the effectiveness of your colonoscopy prep by the color of the fluid you expel from your rectum. A perfect prep results in a clear yellow liquid that resembles urine. The yellow color is from liver bile, which helps digest the fat in your diet. (Your liver doesn't know that you are having a colonoscopy...)



**YOU SHOULD CALL THE OFFICE AT 412-262-1000 AFTER 8:30 AM ON THE MORNING OF YOUR TEST IF YOU ARE STILL HAVING SOLID OR BROWN STOOLS.**

### NOTES/QUESTIONS:

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### Three Rivers Endoscopy Center

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## Special Instruction for Diabetics

We realize our patients with diabetes may be wondering about the safety of a colonoscopy prep. The bottom line is it can be done safely if you follow instructions. Your colonoscopy prep will mean significant changes to what and how much you eat, which can easily cause unpredictability of blood sugar. This will require a temporary adjustment in your diabetic medications. The biggest fear is low blood sugar (hypoglycemia). You should monitor your blood sugar. We don't want you going low. We advise patients with diabetes to tolerate a slightly higher blood sugar for a day or two, which will not cause long-term harm. One day of glucose readings that are slightly higher or "permissive hyperglycemia" is way better than having a hypoglycemic event. Follow the guidelines below. If you have brittle diabetes or your diabetes is difficult to control, discuss the prep adjustments with your endocrinologist or PCP. A [2023 review](#) offers some standard recommendations:

- **Metformin/GlucoPhage:** Stop taking it when the liquid diet begins and resume once you're back to eating regular meals after the procedure.
- **Semiglutide:** (Ozempic/semiglutide, Rybelsus/semuglutide, Wegovy/semiglutide, Zepbound/tirzepatide, Mounjaro/tirzepatide). IF daily capsule, stop 24 hours before the exam; IF weekly injection, stop 1 week before the exam. Resume afterward at normal dose.
- **Other GLP-1 receptor agonists:** (Trulicity/dulaglutide, Byetta/exenatide Victoza/liraglutide ): Stop taking when the liquid diet begins and resume once you're back to eating normal meals after the procedure. If your regular weekly injection is scheduled during your colonoscopy prep period, hold off until you're back to eating normally.
- **DPP-4 inhibitors** (Januvia/sitagliptin, Tradjenta/linagliptin, and Onglyza/saxagliptin): Stop the morning of the procedure and resume that evening.
- **SGLT-2 inhibitors** (Jardiance/empagliflozin, Farxiga/dapagliflozin, Brenzavvy/bexagliflozin, and Invokana/canagliflozin): Stop taking three days before the procedure and resume once you're back to eating regular meals *and* are adequately hydrated.
- **Sulfonylureas** (Glucotrol/Glipizide) Stop taking the day before the procedure and resume once you're back to regular meals.

Insulin, the diabetes drug with the highest risk of hypoglycemia and an absolute necessity for people with type 1, requires special attention. Please speak to your endocrinologist or PCP because the following are only starting points:

- **Rapid insulin:** People who use an insulin-to-carb ratio to determine how much rapid insulin to use for meals can continue to follow their normal dosing strategy. Those who use fixed doses for each meal must substantially cut their usual dose during the clear liquid prep phase.
- **Basal insulin:** Beginning the day before the procedure, patients will be asked to cut their basal insulin dose by 20 to 50 percent, depending on the insulin they use and the type of diabetes they experience.