

# Preparation for Colonoscopy: General instructions

Patient Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Colonoscopy: \_\_\_\_\_

Laxative medication: \_\_\_\_\_

## REMINDERS

- **WARNING:** It is very important to follow the instructions exactly. Failure to do so may lead to the colon not being clean. If the colon is not clean, the procedure might need to be repeated.
- **IMPORTANT:** Preparing for the colonoscopy starts first thing in the morning on the DAY BEFORE the colonoscopy. On the day prior to your colonoscopy, you are to take only a clear liquid diet for all meals: breakfast and all meals and snacks. Failure to follow this diet may cause the colon not to be clean and the procedure might need to be repeated.
- **Follow only the printed instructions from our office for taking the laxative.**
  - Do not follow the instructions printed on the box the laxative comes in.
  - Do not use instructions for the laxative provided by the pharmacy or other sources.

## One week prior to colonoscopy

- Obtain your laxative from the pharmacy. Contact us if there are any problems getting the medication or problems with cost.
- Transportation
  - You will be receiving medicine that relaxes you for this procedure. For 24 hours after the procedure, you should not drive, work, or engage in any activities that require judgment. You will need to arrange for someone to drive you home after the procedure.
  - Failure to arrange a ride home will result in cancellation of your procedure.
- Medications
  - Please make sure our office has a complete list of all medications you use including prescription medications, over the counter medications, vitamins, and herbal medications.
  - If you are taking blood thinning agents please contact our office for special instructions. We may need to contact the prescribing provider before the procedure to see if it is safe to stop the medication for a few days before the procedure.
  - If you are diabetic, please contact your primary healthcare provider for instructions on how to take your diabetes medications around the time of the procedure to prevent low and high sugar episodes.
  - You may take your morning medications on the day of the colonoscopy, including blood pressure medications, with sips of water.

## Two days before Colonoscopy

- Make sure you have the instructions from our office on how to take your specific laxative. In addition to these general instructions, there will be an additional page of instructions for the specific laxative you are prescribed. If you do not have the prescription and the instructions for the laxative, call our office to get them right away.
- Reread all written instructions to know what you will need to do tomorrow. Be aware that you will need to be on a clear liquid diet for the entire day before the colonoscopy (this includes all meals and snacks starting as soon as you wake up).

## One day before the Colonoscopy

- Reread all written instructions first thing in the morning.
- **CLEAR LIQUID DIET:** THE CLEAR LIQUID DIET STARTS AS SOON AS YOU WAKE UP IN THE MORNING THE DAY BEFORE THE COLONOSCOPY AND INCLUDES ALL MEALS AND SNACKS FOR THE ENTIRE DAY.
  - You may not eat any solid foods of any kind and the only liquids you may take are clear liquids: water, coffee and tea (no dairy or nondairy creamers), strained fruit juices that do not have pulp (apple, white grape, cranberry), carbonated soda, clear broth. You may have jello and popsicles if they are not red or purple in color. You may have clear hard candy.
  - DIABETICS: please follow your normal diabetic dietary restrictions as they pertain to the liquids mentioned above and other clear liquids. Crystal Light is a good sugar free option for diabetic patients. Check your blood sugar every 2-3 hours, as you may need to take some sugar if the diet for the procedure makes your blood sugar low.
- Take your laxative medication as directed in the written instructions from our office only.
  - What to expect: There will be a large amount of watery diarrhea. This is the desired effect. There is often cramping and bloating.
  - It is critical that you take **ALL** of the laxative as ordered. Even if the diarrhea appears clear and watery, you still must finish all of the medication.
  - Some patients have difficulty with the taste of the laxative. If you drink it with a straw over the tongue, you may taste it less.
- Drink plenty of liquids all day. This will help prevent dehydration and low blood pressure when you come for the procedure.
- You may drink water up to 4 hours before the procedure.
- Pay close attention to the scheduled arrival time and arrive on time. Though late arrival can result in cancellation of your procedure, please call us right away if you think you will be late.
- If you have any questions or problems please call right away. We are available after hours and are here to help you through this process. Office number 602-266-5678.