

University Endoscopy Center

Colonoscopy Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ's)

Q. Is there any way that I can make this prep solution taste any better?

A. You can try sucking on hard candy or rinse your mouth with water or mouthwash. Do not eat or drink anything while you are drinking the solution.

Q. Why avoid red, orange, purple and blue liquids?

A. These colors can persist in the colon and potentially look like blood

Q. One of the medications I was told to take the morning of my procedure is red. Can I take it?

A. Medications for blood pressure, heart conditions, and seizures should be taken the morning of your exam regardless of color.

Q. I feel like vomiting and do not think I can drink any more. What should I do?

A. It is important that you continue to drink the solution if possible. Without a clean bowel, the doctor will not be able to see the inside of your colon to complete the examination. If you do vomit, wait 30 minutes, and begin drinking the solution again. If not improved, call us, and have a phone number of an open pharmacy to call in a prescription.

Q. I drank a lot of the solution and have not gone to the bathroom yet. What should I do?

A. Keep drinking. Most people have a bowel movement after an hour; some patients may take two hours or longer.

Q. I am taking the prep and now have loose, watery stools. Do I still need the rest of the prep?

A. Yes, you may have solid stool higher in the colon that needs to be eliminated.

Q. I already had diarrhea before taking the prep, do I still have to take the laxative?

A. Yes, you must take the prep as directed by your doctor. Your colon is approximately six feet long. The entire colon must be emptied for your physician to see the colon clearly.

Q. I see yellow color in the toilet bowl and a few flecks. What do I do?

A. If you drank the entire solution or if your last bowel movements were clear enough that you were able to see the bottom of the toilet, you should be fine. It is okay if you have some flecks of material. The yellow color is a result of bile that normally colors the feces. This should not interfere with the examination.

Q. My bottom is so sore. What can I do?

A. To clean the area, avoid rubbing. Gently pat with a wet washcloth. Apply Vaseline, Preparation H, or Desitin liberally.

Q. Can I drink alcoholic beverages?

A. We strongly suggest that you do not drink any alcoholic beverages prior to your procedure since they can cause dehydration and some wines may thin your blood.

Q. Can I chew gum or suck on candy?

A. You may chew gum on your prep day, but you may NOT chew it the morning of your colonoscopy.

Q. What if I am still passing stool the morning of my test?

A. Call the office or endoscopy center.

Q. Can I brush my teeth?

A. Please do.

Q. Can I wear my dentures?

A. Yes, you may wear your dentures to the endoscopy suite. However, you may be asked to remove them prior to the procedure.

Q. I have been instructed not to take anti-inflammatory or blood thinners several days before the procedure. What can I take for headaches and pain relief?

A. You may take Tylenol as directed.

Q. Can I have chicken soup?

A. You can only have the broth; no noodles, chicken or vegetables allowed.

Q. Can I have the colonoscopy if I am on my menstrual period?

A. Yes, the procedure can still be performed. We ask that you use a tampon if possible (not absolutely necessary).