

## FAQs about your colonoscopy prep

### **Why do I have to drink clear liquids for 24 hours before my colonoscopy?**

If food is eaten the day before the procedure, it may show up in the colon for the colonoscopy. A day of clear liquids helps clear out the colon of solid waste and gives the doctor a better chance of having a clear view of your colon.

### **What is a “clear liquid?”**

Examples of clear liquids are: water, Gatorade, Powerade, iced tea, lemonade, apple juice, clear cranberry juice, white grape juice, broth, coffee and tea (without milk, creamer), sodas and seltzer. Milk and orange juice are cloudy, and can cloud up the intestines. These should be avoided. Alcohol should be avoided because it will dehydrate you.

### **Why not red or purple?**

If you drink red or purple-colored drinks before your colonoscopy, the fluid will resemble blood in the intestine.

### **Can I drink water and Gatorade all day?**

Water and Gatorade are good to drink. However, if you drink ONLY those fluids all day, you may develop water toxicity, dilute the salt levels in your body and become sick. That is why BROTH is recommended for your meals on the prep day.

### **Why do I have to start my prep so late?**

Starting the prep later will help keep the colon cleaned out for your procedure. Washing out the colon too early may result in bile covering the early half of the colon, making it hard for your doctor to see.

### **Why do I have to drink so much liquid?**

Your colon is about 5 feet long – it takes a certain amount of liquid to safely clean out the colon so the doctor can see any polyps or lesions in the colon. With smaller amounts of prep fluid, a person is at risk for dehydration, and a poor prep.

### **Why should I avoid nuts, seeds, popcorn and corn for a week?**

These foods are hard to wash out of the colon. Also, if there are any remaining nuts, seeds or corn in the colon, they will clog the scope, making your procedure more difficult.

### **What if I start vomiting, or feel like I am going to vomit while drinking the prep?**

Stop drinking for 30-45 minutes until symptoms subside, then resume.

### **What if I drink the whole prep and don't have a bowel movement?**

The prep will take some time to work its way through. If you haven't had a bowel movement by 7AM, call our office.

### **What if I have rectal discomfort?**

You can apply petroleum jelly or Vaseline or diaper rash ointment to the rectal area. Baby wipes may also help.

### **Why should I not have gum or sucking candies before my procedure?**

Gum and sucking candies will stimulate acid and stomach fluid for several hours. If this happens right before your procedure, you may aspirate, or vomit and inhale your stomach acid, which will cause pneumonia.

### **Why can't I work or drive for 24 hours after my colonoscopy?**

After receiving any sedation, you will not be at your best. Your judgment, memory and reflexes will be impaired.

### **What is the difference between a DIAGNOSTIC and a SCREENING colonoscopy?**

A DIAGNOSTIC COLONOSCOPY investigates an active problem, such as pain or bleeding. A SCREENING COLONOSCOPY is performed for a routine health check without active problems. If a screening colonoscopy is done, and something is biopsied or removed, your insurance company may re-classify your procedure as a DIAGNOSTIC test.