

Preparation instructions for Barium Enema:

In order for the test to be successful, your colon has to be completely empty. You will need to take an "Oral Bowel Cleansing Agent" (sometimes also called 'bowel prep') e.g. Citrafleet or Picolax and you must follow our diet.

Please follow the instructions set out as follows:

One week before the test

Stop taking any iron tablets and/or food containing bran. Please read all food labels.

One day before the test

Omit all solid foods. Drink at least half a pint of **clear** fluid every hour throughout the day. You can choose from clear soups and Consommé, Bovril, Oxo, Marmite, fruit squashes without added fruit juice, lemonade, cola and other fizzy drinks, black tea and coffee (do **not** add milk or whitener), water, sorbets without fruit or nuts, boiled sweets, pastilles and peppermints

At 12.00 mid-day, take one sachet of the laxative. Dissolve the contents in a cup of water, stir well for 2-3 minutes, and then drink the mixture. Please take care, as the mixture may get hot.

At 18.00, take second sachet in the same way.

Nb: from 12.00 mid-day onwards, you will need to be very close to a vacant toilet. You may carry on drinking clear fluids until you go to bed.



The day of the test

You may sip water up until you arrive in hospital.

Take all your oral medications as normal with a glass of water or if you are in doubt bring them into hospital with you.

If you are taking Warfarin or other medicines that thin your blood, you **MUST** ring us at least one week before your appointment date, as it may be necessary for you to stop taking these medicines before your colonoscopy.

If you are a diabetic, you **MUST** ring the Diabetic Nurse Specialist at least one week before your appointment date for advice to prevent complications occurring from taking the laxative medicine. Her telephone number is 01932 723 315.

For inpatients only

If you are already an in-patient at the hospital, the ward nurses looking after you will make sure you are prepared for the test beforehand, and afterwards you will recover in your hospital bed.

An advice sheet for patients who have been prescribed an oral bowel cleansing agent:

You have been prescribed an oral bowel cleansing agent (sometimes also called a 'bowel prep'). Its role is to clear out your bowels. This is important to ensure the safety and effectiveness of the planned procedure. There is a risk of developing dehydration, low blood pressure, or kidney problems with this medication. The doctor prescribing the oral bowel cleansing agent will have assessed your risk and identified the most appropriate medication for you. You should also have had a blood test to check your kidney function. A number of oral bowel cleansing agents are available. You should also refer to the manufacturer's instructions when taking your preparation. However, the following rules apply in all cases.

The prescribed dose of oral bowel cleansing agent should not be exceeded. The oral bowel cleansing agent should not be taken over a period longer than 24 hours.

Oral bowel cleansing agents predispose to dehydration. You should maintain a good fluid intake whilst taking these medications. If you develop the symptoms of dehydration, and cannot increase your fluid intake, then you should seek medical attention. These symptoms include dizziness or light-headedness (particularly on standing up), thirst, or a reduced urine production.

You should follow any specific advice you have been given with regard to your regular medications. Medications that you may have been asked to temporarily discontinue include:

Antihypertensives (to lower your blood pressure) such as ace inhibitors like Ramipril®

Diuretics ('water tablets', such as Furosemide)

Non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (a type of painkiller, such as Ibuprofen)



Iron preparations (for anaemia, such as Ferrous Sulphate)

Aspirin, Dipyridamole, Clopidogrel or Warfarin (these agents thin your blood out; you may have been asked to discontinue them depending on the nature of the procedure that is planned).

If you have not received specific advice regarding your regular medications then you should continue to take them as normal. However, you may need to amend the timing as it is preferable to avoid taking them less than one hour either side of any dose of oral bowel cleansing agent.

Patients taking immunosuppressant for transplanted organs should seek the advice of their doctor before taking an oral bowel cleansing agent.

Patients taking the oral contraceptive pill should take alternative precautions during the week following taking the oral bowel cleansing agent.

If you experience problems, advice from a healthcare professional is available on contact numbers provided on page 4 of patient information leaflet.

(An advice sheet for patients who have been prescribed an oral bowel cleansing agent: adapted from “consensus guidelines for the prescription and administration of oral bowel cleansing agents, Royal College of Radiologists, September 2009”)

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