

## Preparing for your Colonoscopy

Your colon must be absolutely clean and clear of stool in order for your physician to get the best view possible. It is very important that your physician's instructions be followed carefully. The quality of the preparation can affect the physician's ability to detect abnormalities in the colon. Small or flat polyps can hide under stool. Any solid material retained in the colon may prolong the procedure or make it necessary to repeat the examination at another time.

Most colonoscopy preps begin with clear liquids the day before the procedure. Do not drink milk or dairy products (not even in your coffee or tea). Drink water, lemonade, clear juices, ginger ale, plain tea, black coffee, jello, clear broth, or sports drinks. Do not to drink anything red since the dye may conceal a problem in the colon. ([link to liquid diet](#))

There are several different types of preparations and your physician will determine which is best for you. Some require a prescription. All will produce large volumes of watery diarrhea.

Before your colonoscopy let your doctor know about any kidney or cardiac problems you have. The elderly may have more difficulty with dehydration or electrolyte unbalance. Other factors which may affect your choice of preparation;

- ✓ Will it be difficult for you to drink large volumes of liquid that may not taste very good?
- ✓ Are pills hard for you to swallow?
- ✓ Do you have cardiovascular or kidney problems?
- ✓ Do you have insurance coverage for a prescription or would an over-the-counter prep be better?
- ✓

***So, even if it's tough, it's important. If you have trouble finishing your prep, call your doctor right away so something else can be suggested. The best prep is one you can finish.***