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Fasting And Bowel Preparation For Your Colonoscopy Procedure

Colonoscopy fasting is one of several important steps an individual must take in order to get ready for the colonoscopy procedure itself. Another is called bowel prep, or bowel preparation.

In this article, we hope to provide you with some basic information and facts about these two important steps that precede your colon exam.

Colonoscopy fasting and bowel prep are designed to make sure you've moved all stools and other intestinal debris out of your colon by the time you go into the operating room. By fasting and taking a prescribed laxative the day before, you give your doctor the best chance of getting a clear view of the walls of your colon.

The colonoscopy procedure itself usually takes less than an hour (sometimes only 30 minutes or even less). But your doctor will want you to start the colonoscopy preparation process a full day in advance.

Colonoscopy fasting starts the morning of the day before your procedure is scheduled to take place. Your doctor may choose to ask you to fast for a slightly longer period. This depends on your situation. But during the fast, there are only certain foods you'll be allowed to eat.

Gelatin and Popsicles are among the more popular foods you're allowed to eat during the colonoscopy fasting period. However, your flavor choices are restricted. You won't be permitted to have red or blue because these can discolor the walls of your colon during the procedure. This of course, makes it more difficult for your doctor to tell if there are any problems. The following are also allowed

- * diet soda.
- * fat-free bouillon or broth
- * including Life Savers or lemon drops
- * plain coffee
- * plain tea without sweeteners or milk
- * strained fruit juice specifically apple, white grape, or cranberry
- * plain water

Definitely stay away from dairy products, including milk, ice cream, or cream soup.

Usually, your doctor will allow you to have clear liquids until approximately four hours before your procedure. But be sure to ask him or her about it.

In addition to food and drink restrictions, you'll also have to complete the other major step prior to your colonoscopy, known as "bowel prep."

There are several types of strong laxatives your doctor will prescribe, and you'll take these the evening before your colonoscopy. Popular brands of colon prep include Golytely®, Fleets Phospho-Soda® and Movi-Prep®.

These products generally require you to take them in a series of doses over the course of several hours. Make sure you follow the directions on the packaging, and also observe any further recommendations from your doctor.

These laxatives will take a lot of fluids out of your system, so your doctor will recommend that you drink three-to-six glasses of water or clear liquid (about 8 ounces each) in between each dose.

After you take several doses of the laxatives, you'll feel them beginning to work. You'll feel like you have diarrhea, and you should be prepared to take repeated trips to the bathroom during the rest of the evening.

After having a colonoscopy, many people say the procedure itself was easier than they thought it would be. Since you're sedated, you don't really feel any pain or discomfort. The fasting (which takes some determination) and the bowel prep (which can definitely be unpleasant) - are frequently described as the hardest part of the process.

The biggest benefit of having a colonoscopy is in making sure your colon is free of any signs of colon cancer. But while doing the examination, your doctor will also be able to see if any other problems may be developing, such as colon polyps or diverticulosis.

Thanks to advances in colonoscopy procedure technology, plus increased public awareness through media campaigns, the number of colon cancer cases in the last few decades has been steadily decreasing.

Click on [colonoscopy fasting](#) and [screening tests for colon cancer](#) to learn more about [keeping your colon healthy](#). Neal Kennedy is a former radio and television talk show host with a special interest in medical topics.

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