

Colonoscopy (Electrolyte Solution 12:30-4:30p.m.)

One Week Before Your Colonoscopy

1. Tell us if you are taking blood thinning medicine (such as Warfarin, Coumadin, Plavix or Enoxaparin). You must talk to your primary physician about the possibility of stopping the drug. If you do not tell us you are taking these medications, you have an increased risk of bleeding during the procedure. Contact the GI clinic 7 days before your procedure if there is any question regarding this.
2. If you are an individual who refuses blood or blood products, please call Meriter Hospital's Bloodless Medicine & Surgery Coordinator, at (608) 267-6259. Outside of Madison, call 1-800-236-2367. You can visit their web page at <http://www.meriter.com/mhs/hospital/bloodlss.htm>.
3. Do not take any iron supplements.
4. Avoid all nuts, seeds and popcorn.
5. Arrange for someone to drive you to and from the procedure. (Do not use a cab or a bus). You cannot drive for the rest of the day after your procedure because of the sedation medications you will receive. If you cannot arrange for a driver, we will need to reschedule your appointment. Do not plan any activities for the rest of the day following the test because of drowsiness from the medications. The entire procedure will take 3-4 hours.
6. Arrange for your driver to be with you after the procedure because:
 - You need someone with you to hear what the doctor and nurses tell you after the procedure. The medications you receive will affect your memory for a few hours afterwards and you may not remember what you are told.
 - You must have an escort from the unit after your procedure. For these reasons, please have your driver come with you to the Endoscopy Unit and stay until you are discharged. Due to limited waiting room space, it is suggested to have only one person accompany you.
7. Do not bring children with you. The setting of the Endoscopy Unit and the time spending waiting (2-3 hours) are stressful for children. We encourage you to make child care arrangements prior to your appointment.

The Entire Day Before Your Colonoscopy

1. No solid foods.
2. Do not drink milk or dairy products.
3. Drink only clear liquids, i.e.: broth, clear juices (apple, white grape, white cranberry), jell-o, coffee, tea, soda and popsicles. No solids! No red or purple jell-o or liquids. Gatorade is the preferred clear liquid to avoid dehydration.
4. Mix colon electrolyte solution according to the directions on the container. You may refrigerate it if you prefer to drink it cold. You may add 2-4 tablespoons of Crystal Light sugar-free lemonade to your plain electrolyte solution to suit your taste.

5. Begin drinking electrolyte solution at 6:00p.m. Drink only half the gallon, one 8oz. glass every 15 minutes. Do not drink this in less than 1 hour but no more than 2 hours.
6. Do not eat or drink anything except solution after beginning the solution. After completing the solution, you may have clear liquids up to 3 hours prior to your scheduled arrival time.
7. Liquid stools will usually start within a few hours. Your stools should become clear, light yellow after you finish drinking the solution.
8. While drinking the electrolyte solution, you may experience:
 - Chills
 - Nausea
 - Abdominal crampingThese are normal responses to the laxative.
9. If you develop persistent vomiting or continuous, severe abdominal pain, stop drinking the solution and call (608) 287-2680 immediately to speak with the physician on call.
10. If your stools are not clear or light yellow by 11:00p.m., please call (608) 287-2680 to speak with the physician on call; you may need additional prep solution.

The Day of Your Colonoscopy

1. Drink the remaining electrolyte solution at 6:00a.m. You may have liquid stool for another 4 hours. You may have colorless clear liquids such as water, ginger ale, 7-Up or a weak tea or coffee (without milk or cream) up to 3 hours prior to your scheduled arrival time at the Endoscopy Suite. Avoid red liquids as they can confuse the finding of the test. Also avoid all solids and milk products.
2. If you take medication to help regulate your heartbeat or blood pressure, or to help you breathe better, please take them with a few sips of water as early in the morning as possible. Bring all medications that you are currently taking with you.
3. If your stools are not clear or light yellow after your morning bowel prep, please call Meriter Endoscopy and ask to speak to the charge nurse. The number is (608) 417-6389.
4. Please leave all jewelry and other valuables at home for safekeeping.
5. Report to Meriter Hospital patient registration desk at the time of your appointment. Late arrivals are difficult to accommodate because of our procedure schedule. If you arrive at the Endoscopy Unit more than 30 minutes past your procedures time, you may need to be rescheduled.
6. The procedural setting of the Endoscopy Unit and the time spent waiting (3-4 hours) are stressful for children. We encourage you to make child care arrangements rather than bring children with you.

After the Colonoscopy Exam

- Although we try to discuss our findings and recommendations with you after the procedure, some patients find that they don't clearly remember that discussion because of receiving the sedative medication. We feel it is very important for you

to have the person driving you home remain with you while the doctor talks to you. That person will be your “memory” for the day. We always send a report to your doctor.

- You may feel bloated for a few hours. This is caused by air that was put into your colon during the exam.
- In general, it is 3-4 hours from the time you arrive in the endoscopy unit to the time you are ready to go home.
- When you get home after the test you will want to rest and take it easy for the rest of the day.
- It is important to stay hydrated with liquids after your procedure.
- Do not drive or operate any dangerous equipment until the next day because you still will be partially sedated from the medicine you have received.
- You should not drink alcoholic beverages that evening because of the sedation.
- Avoid making any important decisions until the day following the test because of the lingering effects of the drugs we have given you.
- Most people find that they feel perfectly normal the day following the test and can go back to work or otherwise resume normal activities without difficulty.
- The place where the IV was inserted may be somewhat tender for a day or two. You can relieve this by placing a warm, moist washcloth over the area. If it continues for more than a day or two, please let us know.

How to Contact Us

We appreciate the opportunity to participate in your health care and hope that you feel free to ask us any questions. If you have questions about our findings or recommendations, please feel free to call us at the GI Clinic (608) 287-2680 and we will return the call as soon as possible. If you feel your questions cannot wait until regular office hours our answering service will contact us.

Call Us Immediately If:

- You have a new, severe, sharp or steady pain in your abdomen or chest.
- You have a fever over 100 degrees Fahrenheit.
- You have a shaking chill.
- You pass more than one tablespoon of blood from the rectum.