

# CT Colonography Bowel Prep

This preparation is for patients with normal or mildly impaired kidney function (eGFR value of 30 or greater). If you have serious kidney disease (eGFR value of less than 30), have your doctor call St. Joseph's Medical Imaging department for alternate preparation instructions.

## Preparation Instructions

Please follow the instructions in this handout very carefully. The instructions have been tested to ensure they minimize discomfort while producing a clean bowel. An incompletely clean bowel may mean that the test will have to be repeated. More importantly, if the bowel is not clean, remaining stool can hide serious conditions that may be present.

**One to two weeks prior to your appointment**, purchase a CT Colonography Bowel Prep kit at St. Joseph's Prescription Shop located at St Joseph's Hospital, (Zone A, Level 1, Room A1-013). The Prescription Shop is open Monday to Friday from 9:00 am to 5:00 pm.

The kit includes:

- Barium Readicat (450 ml)
- Gastrografin (30 ml)
- Picosalax (Purg-odan) (2 packages)
- Ducolax suppositories

The approximate cost of the kit is \$49.99 + HST.

Please check the expiry date on each of the items in the kit before beginning the preparation.

Everything you require to prepare for the CT Colonography exam is in this kit. Ignore the individual package inserts and follow the instructions on this handout.

## Clear fluids list:

- water
- juices without pulp, such as white grape juice, cranberry or cran-apple
- decaffeinated coffee or weak tea. Do not use any milk or cream.
- decaffeinated soft drinks
- popsicles
- broth, bouillon
- juice-based high calorie beverage, Boost. Do not drink chocolate flavour Boost.

Do not drink any milk products.

Do not drink water only as you may feel faint.

**Medications:** You may continue to take all of your regular medications throughout the preparation time. If you are on insulin, ask your doctor or primary care provider about modifications to your dose.

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## Two days before your test

Eat a normal evening meal (supper). This will be the last solid food you eat until after your test. After supper, only drink items from the clear fluid list. **Do not eat any food.** Place the Barium Readicat and Gastrografin in the refrigerator.

## The day before your test

### Breakfast:

1. Dissolve one package of Picosalax (Purg-odan) in a glass of cold water, stirring constantly for 2-3 minutes or until it is completely dissolved. If the solution warms while stirring, let it cool or add more cold water before drinking. Drink this glass followed by an equal or larger glass of juice. Drink 4 or 5 more glasses of clear fluid over the next hour. You will experience frequent bowel movements which may occur within an hour. Stay close to a washroom. You may find that wet wipes are easier for cleaning yourself than toilet paper.
2. One hour after taking Picosalax (Purg-odan) take the first 100 ml of Barium Readicat. It may be easier to drink this medication if you use a straw.
3. Continue to drink clear fluids throughout the morning and afternoon.

**Snack:** Popsicle or decaffeinated soft drink.

**Lunch:** Broth, bouillon, or Boost (except chocolate). **Drink the remaining 350 mL of the Barium Readicat by 1:00 pm.**

**Snack:** Popsicle or decaffeinated soft drink.

### Evening meal (supper) at about 5:00 pm or 6:00 pm:

1. Take the second package of Picosalax (Purg-odan) the same way you did at breakfast. If the solution warms while stirring, let it cool or add more cold water before drinking. Drink 4 or 5 glasses of clear fluid over the next hour. You will experience frequent bowel movements which may occur within an hour. Stay close to a washroom.
2. Continue to drink clear fluids throughout the early evening.

### At 8:00 pm:

1. Take 30 ml of Gastrografin mixed with 8 ounces of clear fluid. Again, it may be easier to drink this medication through a straw.
2. Insert the first rectal suppository. This should empty your bowel of any residual fluid.
3. **Do not drink any fluids after midnight.** The only exception is a small sip of water if you need to take any medication(s) in the morning.

## On the day of your test

If you are diabetic, you may have a light breakfast to prevent an insulin reaction.

## In the morning, about 2 hours before your test:

1. Insert the second rectal suppository.
2. **Do not drink any fluids.** You may take a small sip of water if you need to take any medications.
3. Try to empty your bowel one last time just before the test to ensure little fluid is left in your bowel for the test.

## After the test

You can immediately resume your normal diet, medications, and activity.

## Commonly asked questions

### ***Q. What is a CT colonography?***

A. This is a safe and painless exam of the large bowel (colon). To prepare for this test, you must follow the bowel preparation instructions listed above.

### ***Q. What happens during the procedure and how long does it take?***

A. The exam takes about 20 minutes to complete. You will not need sedation for this exam, but some medication may be given by IV to relax the colon. Once you are on the CT table, a small tube will be gently placed a very short distance into your rectum. Carbon dioxide will be slowly introduced into your bowel via this tube. Once your colon is distended, the CT images are taken. You will experience some fullness, which will quickly dissipate after the exam.

### ***Q. What do I do if I am working the day before the test?***

A. Take the first package of Picosalax (Purg-odan) at 6:00 pm two nights before your test, instead of the morning of the day before your test. Take the second package of Picosalax (Purg-odan) at 6:00 pm the night before the test. You will still be on a fluid diet at work the day before the test but should not have to make frequent trips to the washroom during working hours.

### ***Q. When do I start the prep?***

A. The prep takes one evening followed by one full day. It starts two nights before the day of your test. If your test is booked on a Monday, you can eat normally all day Saturday. After your normal evening meal on Saturday, you should start the prep and drink only clear fluids, as directed. The prep continues all day Sunday so that you will be ready for your test on Monday.

**Q. It's been a few hours since I took the Picosalax (Purg-odan) and I still haven't had a bowel movement. What should I do?**

A. Continue with the prep as directed. Everyone's digestive system works differently. If you have no results after taking the second package of Picosalax (Purg-odan), contact your doctor or pharmacist.

**Q. Can I drive home after the procedure?**

A. Yes, you can.

**Q. Can I go back to work after the procedure?**

A. Yes, you can resume normal activity as well as your normal diet.

**Q. What should I do if I get nausea/vomiting during the preparation?**

If you experience any vomiting, take 25 mg of Gravol, wait 30 minutes and continue with the rest of the preparation. If vomiting persists, call your doctor or primary care provider.

**Q. Is there a limit to the amount of fluids I can take the day before the exam?**

A. No, you can drink as much clear fluid as you like. You only need to limit your fluid intake on the day of the exam.

**Q. Should I continue to take my current medications with this prep?**

A. Yes. There is NO change to your medications for this exam, take your usual medication(s) as directed. You may take medications for headaches, colds, etc. as needed.

**If you have diabetes**, you may need to adjust your insulin or other diabetes medications as a result of the food and fluid restrictions. Before your procedure, please check with your doctor or primary care provider for instructions about your diabetes medication(s).

We recommend that you bring your diabetes medication(s) and some food with you to your appointment, so you can eat after your test is complete.

**Q. I have a long drive to my appointment, when should I take the last suppository?**

Arrive at the hospital 30 minutes before your scheduled appointment and insert the suppository when you arrive at the hospital.

If you have any other questions please contact your doctor or primary care provider before your test.

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