





## Getting Ready for Your Colonoscopy

Exam Arrival Date and Time: \_\_\_\_\_

Exam performed by Dr. \_\_\_\_\_

 Brigham and Women's Hospital  
Endoscopy Center  
75 Francis Street  
Amory Building, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor  
Boston, MA 02115

 Brigham and Women's Outpatient  
Endoscopy Center  
850 Boylston Street (Route 9)  
2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, Suite 202  
Chestnut Hill, MA 02467

This guide covers how you need to prepare so we can get the best exam of your colon. Please complete all of the steps in this guide so you can have your colonoscopy on the scheduled day.

This guide includes:

- List of tasks to complete before you schedule your procedure
- Shopping List
- Prep Instructions
- Patient Survey

**Please read all instructions at least 2 weeks before your exam**

Please note: These preparation instructions may be different from the last time you had a colonoscopy. We have updated our prep instructions to be more effective, so you can have the best exam of your colon.



## Medical Words Used in this Guide

Some words in this guide may be new to you. Let's go over what these words mean.

### **Colon**

When food is turned into solid waste, the solid waste passes through the colon. The colon removes salt and water from the solid waste. Tumors and other health conditions can affect the colon.

### **Colonoscopy**

A test to look inside your body at the colon to see if you have tumors or other health conditions that are affecting the proper functioning of your colon.

### **Laxative**

A medication that helps you move your bowels.

## Why Proper Colon Cleaning Is Needed

Food and liquids can stay in your body for a long time. If there is food still in your system when you get your colonoscopy, the food can get in the way of seeing any problems that may exist, like tumors.

***The doctor will get the best pictures of your colon when it is completely empty.***

The doctor will be able to tell right away if your colon is empty. If your colon is not completely empty, you will not be able to complete the exam. You will need to reschedule the exam and go through the preparation steps again.

## Important Contact Info

Please follow this guide to get the best possible colonoscopy. Your exam cannot be performed if you do not complete all of the steps.

- If you have questions about the prep instructions or your procedure Monday-Friday (excluding holidays) between 8:00 am and 4:30 pm, please call **617-525-6814**.
- If you are calling Monday-Friday after 4:30pm, during the weekend or on a holiday, please call **617-732-5500** and ask to speak to the GI doctor on call.
- If you need to reschedule your exam for any reason, please call **617-732-7426**.
- If you need medical help now, call **911** or go to the nearest **Emergency Room**.



## What You Need to Do Before You Arrive For Your Colonoscopy

### Before Your Colonoscopy

- Update your registration information by calling 866-489-4056.
- If you need a referral, call your insurance company.
- If you answer **yes** to anything in the "Medical History" section of your survey and it was not discussed when you scheduled your exam, please call the endoscopy nurse at **617-525-6814**.

### Medications

- If you have diabetes, ask your doctor about how to take your insulin and other diabetes medications.
- If you take blood thinners (Coumadin, Plavix, Pradaxa, Lovenox, etc), ask your doctor if you should stop these medications before your colonoscopy. Please notify the endoscopy nurse at 617-525-6814 if your doctor has recommended you **not** stop this for your colonoscopy.

### Transportation

- Please plan ahead for an adult to take you home after your procedure. You will not be permitted to drive after your exam for your safety. **If you do not have an adult to take you home, the colonoscopy cannot be performed.**
- Please be aware that the 75 Francis Street Endoscopy Center closes at 6 pm and the 850 Boylston Street Endoscopy Center closes at 4:30 pm. Please make sure that your ride is available to escort you home no later than the closing time.

### What to Bring to Your Colonoscopy

- Completed "Patient Survey" (please make sure to record the last time you took each of your medications)
- Name and phone number of the person who will take you home. They should be available to pick up within 30 minutes of being called.
- Photo identification
- DO NOT bring jewelry other than wedding rings

### When Your Colonoscopy is completed

- In most cases, you will spend about 3 hours in the Endoscopy Unit from the time you arrive. We try to start your exam on time, but medical care can result in unavoidable delays.
- You cannot drive or drink alcohol for 12 hours after your procedure.

# Colonoscopy Shopping List

## What to Buy At the Grocery Store

For clear liquids (examples below):



**1 box Chicken Bouillon/broth**  
(No noodles or solids in the broth)



**1 box "Jell-o"/gelatin**  
(No flavors with red coloring)



**1 bottle Ginger Ale or Clear Juice**  
(Any brand)



**2 bottles (32oz each) of Gatorade**  
(needed for preparation)  
(No flavors with red coloring)

## What to Buy At the Pharmacy

Laxatives you will need:



**2 bottles of magnesium citrate**



**1 box Dulcolax or generic "Dulcolax" (bisacodyl) pills**



**1 bottle of Miralax or generic "Miralax" (polyethylene glycol) 8.3 oz (238 grams)**



**1 saline Fleet or generic saline "Fleet" enema brand**



## Colonoscopy 2 Day MiraLax Preparation Instructions

### Three Days Before Your Exam

- Stop eating solid food at **midnight**
- You can only have **clear liquids**, such as Jell-o, popsicles, broth, tea, black coffee and juice.
- You cannot eat solid food until **AFTER** your colonoscopy is done.



### Two Days Before Your Exam

1. Drink 2 bottles of magnesium citrate
2. After each bottle drink 3 glasses (24oz) of water
  - This will cause you to have loose stools
  - Continue drinking even if you have diarrhea



### The Day Before at 2pm

1. Take 2 Dulcolax (or generic brand bisacodyl) pills with full glass of water



### The Day Before at 5pm

1. Pour 1 bottle of Gatorade and half (½) bottle of Miralax in a big pitcher or jug
2. Stir until Miralax is combined
3. Drink 1 glass of the Gatorade/Miralax every 15 minutes until you have finished the entire bottle
  - This will cause you to have loose stools
  - Continue drinking even if you have diarrhea
  - You may have nausea, but please continue drinking to be sure your colon is clean



### 5 Hours Before Your Exam (this may be in the middle of the night)

1. Pour the 2<sup>nd</sup> bottle of Gatorade and the remaining half (½) bottle of Miralax in a big pitcher or jug
2. Stir until Miralax is combined
3. Drink 1 glass of the Gatorade/Miralax every 15 minutes until you have finished the entire bottle
4. You must stop drinking this preparation at least 3 hours before your exam



### The Morning of Your Exam

1. Look at your stool
2. If your stool is still not clear or yellow (the color of urine), then use 1 saline fleet enema following the instructions on the box







**Medical History Continued**

**Allergies** \_\_\_\_\_

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**If checked, please explain**

**High Blood Pressure** [ ] \_\_\_\_\_ **Liver Disease** [ ] \_\_\_\_\_

**Diabetes** [ ] \_\_\_\_\_ **Kidney Disease** [ ] \_\_\_\_\_

**Angina/Heart Attack** [ ] \_\_\_\_\_ **Thyroid Disease** [ ] \_\_\_\_\_

**Heart Problems** [ ] \_\_\_\_\_ **Anemia** [ ] \_\_\_\_\_

**Lung Disease** [ ] \_\_\_\_\_ **Arthritis** [ ] \_\_\_\_\_

**Sleep Apnea** [ ] \_\_\_\_\_ **Cancer** [ ] \_\_\_\_\_

**Stroke** [ ] \_\_\_\_\_ **Seizures** [ ] \_\_\_\_\_

**Other** [ ] \_\_\_\_\_

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**Surgical History**

Please use this space to share any additional information you feel is important:

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