

Preparing for an Upper GI Endoscopy and Colonoscopy

Tips for drinking the bowel prep

- It helps to use a straw, placed far back in your mouth, to drink the prep.
- Sip on liquids with a strong taste, like a sports drink, after drinking the prep.
- If you feel sick to your stomach, drinking Gingerale may help. Keep drinking the clear fluids but in smaller amounts and more often so you do not get dehydrated.
- You can also take anti nausea medication, such as Gravol, if you are nauseated. It is very important to keep drinking the bowel prep even if you are feeling sick to your stomach.

During your colonoscopy

The procedure takes about 45 minutes. An intravenous (IV) may be placed to give you medication to make you drowsy and more comfortable. You will be awake, but may not remember much of the experience.

A nurse will be in the room and your blood pressure, heart rate and oxygen will be watched.

When the tube is inserted you may feel as if you need to move your bowels. You may feel some cramping or fullness but there is generally no discomfort.

After the colonoscopy

You will stay in the recovery area until you are ready to go home. You will be given instructions on how to care for yourself when you get home. Rest for the remainder of the day. You may have minor problems such as bloating or cramping, which should go away within 24 hours.

Patient education

Patient education videos are available from the Canadian Association of Gastroenterology. www.cag-acg.org/posters-related-tools/110
For more information about digestive health and tests:
www.gastro.org/patient-center

Where to go for your procedure

Hamilton General Hospital

Check in at Patient Registration on the Main Level **first**. Then go to Endoscopy on the Main Level.

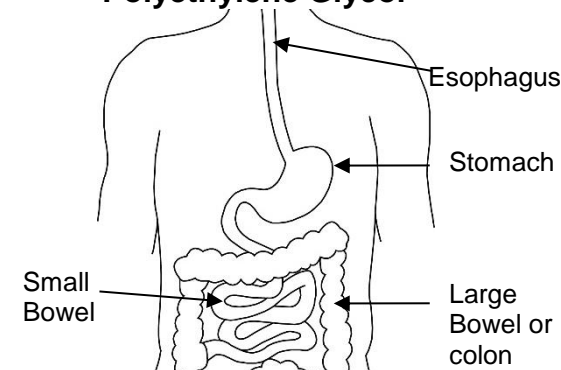
Juravinski Hospital

Check in at Patient Registration on the Main Level **first**. Then go to Section B, Level 3, Endoscopy.

McMaster University Medical Centre

Check in at Patient Registration on the main floor **first**. Then take the yellow elevators to the 4th floor, 4X.

4 Litre Bowel Prep – PEG Polyethylene Glycol



Note: These bookings are in high demand and wait lists are long.

Please be respectful of this and give us 72 hours notice if you are not able to keep your time so that we may offer it to someone else.

Date: _____

Arrival Time: _____

Doctor: _____

An **upper GI endoscopy** is a procedure which involves using a long, flexible tube to see inside the upper digestive system: esophagus, stomach and small bowel.

A **colonoscopy** is a procedure which involves using a different long, flexible tube to see inside the large bowel. You will need to drink a bowel prep solution to clean out your bowels.

Planning for your procedure

The test usually takes 30 to 45 minutes. You will be here for 1 to 2 hours in total. You will be given sedation for the procedure. A responsible adult must come in to the Endoscopy Unit to take you home after the procedure. You are not allowed to drive, or take a taxi or a bus alone. If you do not have a ride arranged, you can either cancel your appointment, or choose to not be sedated.

Medications

Diabetic pills and/or insulin and blood thinners are examples of medications that may need to be adjusted or stopped. Make sure to speak to your doctor or nurse if you take these meds as they will tell you if they need to be stopped or adjusted. Take your usual medications on the day of your test with sips of water, either 2 hours before or 2 hours after drinking the bowel prep to make sure they are absorbed. **Bring** a current official medication and allergy list from your pharmacy with you.

Jewelry

All body jewelry must be removed prior to your procedure. If you are wearing jewelry, your procedure will be cancelled. This is not optional.

Possible complications

Both procedures are. Possible complications include:

- Perforation of or injury to the stomach, small bowel wall, or colon that may need surgery to fix
- Heart and breathing problems
- Bleeding

These problems are unlikely and their chance of occurring depends on other medical conditions and what is done during the procedure. Endoscopy and colonoscopy are not perfect, and some abnormalities such as polyps or cancer may be missed.

Preparation

It is very important to prepare for the test. The large bowel must be cleaned out to examine the bowel wall and detect any abnormalities. A poor preparation increases the risk of missing significant findings and possibly having to repeat the test.

5 days before

Stop taking Iron tablets and fibre supplements, such as Metamucil.

3 days before

Start a low fibre diet. Low fibre foods include beef, chicken, pork, fish (cooked or steamed), canned fruit, dairy products, eggs, white bread, white pasta, white rice.

Do not eat nuts, popcorn, or foods with seeds. Avoid raw fruits and vegetables, whole wheat and high fibre bread. Do not swallow chewing gum.

Purchase the bowel prep.

1 day before

Follow the instructions on the bowel prep container for filling with water. Put the prep in the fridge, as chilling improves the taste. Last solid meal is breakfast.

Drink only clear fluids* until your procedure.

At 4:30pm take 2 Dulcolax pills provided with the prep. Drink 1 glass of bowel prep every 10 minutes until 2 litres of the solution are gone.

Stay near a bathroom

The bowel preparation is a very strong laxative and you will have frequent, watery bowel movements. It can start working within 1 to 4 hours.

Day of procedure

You may need to wake up early. 4 hours before your appointment, take 2 Dulcolax pills and drink the rest of the prep. Make sure to drink plenty of clear fluids after starting the prep to avoid becoming dehydrated.

*Examples of clear fluids that are okay include water, clear sports drinks, pulp free fruit juices, clear soup, black coffee or tea. Avoid drinks that are red, blue or purple.

Check your blood sugar if you are diabetic.

Do not eat or drink for 3 hours before your appointment.

If you have any questions regarding prep or medications, call the Nurse Clinician at 905-521-2100, ext. 76933.