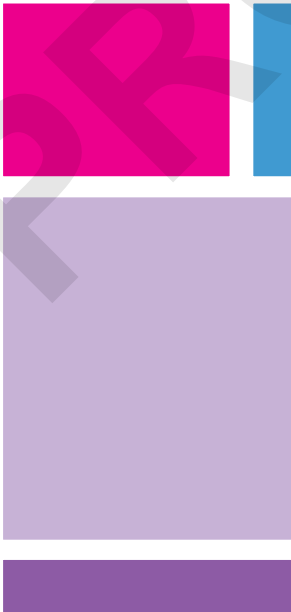


Having a Colonoscopy with Picolax

Gastroenterology Department



What is a Colonoscopy?

A Colonoscopy is a test, which allows a Doctor to look directly at the whole of the large bowel (Colon). In order to do this a flexible tube the thickness of a finger with a light on the end of it is carefully passed through the anus into the rectum and large bowel. This can be uncomfortable as bends in the colon are negotiated. The Colonoscope is connected to a television system where pictures can be seen. It is important you have a clean bowel in order for us to complete this test.

Benefits

By examining your bowel the cause of your symptoms may be found, sometimes we are able to treat them there and then.

Pictures and samples (biopsies) may be taken and sometimes polyps (small growths in the bowel) can be removed or other treatments performed.

Risks

A Colonoscopy is a safe examination but rarely a complication such as bleeding or perforation can occur (1 in 1500) or if polyps removed (1 in 200).

Alternative Treatments

The alternative to a Colonoscopy is a barium enema, a type of x-ray, which does not include treatment and cannot provide biopsies therefore you may still need to have a Colonoscopy at a later date.

Please Note

Your appointment time takes into account the time required to admit you to the unit therefore you should not expect to immediately go through for the test when called. You should expect to be with us for between 2-3 hours (including recovery time).

What to expect on the day

- Before the procedure a nurse will take you to a room and explain the test and ask you some questions. Some of this may be done by phone prior to the day of examination.
- You will then be asked to sign a consent form and change into a hospital gown.
- A small cannula will be placed in your arm to enable us to give you medication for the test, you will then be taken to a trolley and into the room for your test after a short wait.
- In the endoscopy room a sedative is given through the cannula. This is not a general anaesthetic, it will relax you but you will be aware of what is going on. This may cause loss of memory and judgement for some time.
- Following the test you will be moved to the recovery area for about one hour to rest.
- You may feel bloated with wind like discomfort. This is normal and usually settles quickly. If you have a biopsy taken or a polyp removed it is normal to pass small spots of blood from your bottom for a day or two.
- We will ask you not to drive, drink alcohol, operate machinery or sign legal documents for 24 hours after the tests.
- You will need someone to accompany you home because of the effects of the sedation and also someone at home with you for 12 hours following the procedure.
- You will be given the results of the test before leaving the unit (except biopsies).
- **N.B. Please leave all valubles and jewellery at home where possible as we can not look after these for you.**

Picolax Instructions

Picolax (bowel preparation) works by giving you diarrhoea. This is unpleasant but necessary and may last up until your appointment. Easy access to a toilet will be required for the most of the day.

Note: If you have a Colostomy or Ileostomy do not take the bowel preparation - contact the telephone number on top of your appointment letter for advice.

Seven days before the Examination

Stop taking any iron tablets.

If you have chronic constipation (stools infrequent, hard and difficult to pass) take 2 Senna 7.5mg tablets daily for 1 week before beginning your bowel preparation.

Two days before the Examination

Stop taking any medicines that might constipate you i.e. Codeine, Co-phenotrope (Lomotil®), Loperamide (Imodium®), Kaolin & Morphine Mixture.

Stop taking bran and high roughage foods.

It is important that you follow a low residue diet as part of your bowel preparation on the day before taking Picolax.

You will find details of low residue foods on page 8

If your appointment is in the morning

On the Day Before the Examination

Midnight - From now on keep to a LIQUID diet: Clear soup, Bovril, Oxo, lemonade, fizzy drinks, sieved fruit juices, tea or coffee without milk (no red liquids).

Do not eat any solid food

Note : You should continue to take any prescribed medication

8am -Take the first sachet of Picolax: Mix one sachet in 3-4 dessertspoonfuls of cold water. Stir for 2-3 minutes - the mixture will become hot. Wait 5 minutes then dilute the solution with cold water to make half a tumbler (150ml), stir & drink the mixture.

To avoid becoming dehydrated - try to drink at least a cup every hour all day and evening. Aim to drink between 2 to 3 litres (3½ to 5 pints) of fluid during this time.

Be prepared for frequent, loose bowel movements - these may not begin until several hours after you've taken the first sachet of Picolax. The aim is to achieve clear watery motions.

3pm - Take the second sachet of Picolax (mixed as before).Continue drinking clear liquids.

On the Day of the Examination

Continue drinking clear liquids until 2 hours before your examination.

If your appointment is in the afternoon

On the Day Before the Examination

12 Noon - Have a light lunch avoiding all foods containing roughage, including wholemeal bread, vegetables.

1pm - Take the first sachet of Picolax: Mix one sachet in 3-4 dessertspoonfuls of cold water. Stir for 2-3 minutes - the mixture will become hot. Wait 5 minutes then dilute the solution with cold water to make half a tumbler (150ml), stir & drink the mixture.

From now on keep to a LIQUID diet: Clear soup, Bovril, Oxo, fizzy drinks, sieved fruit juices, black tea or coffee (no red liquids).

You should continue to take any prescribed medication.

To avoid becoming dehydrated - try to drink at least a cup every hour all day and evening. Aim to drink between 2 to 3 litres (3½ to 5 pints) of fluid during this time.

Be prepared for frequent, loose bowel movements - these may not begin until several hours after you've taken the first sachet of Picolax. The aim is to achieve clear watery motions.

7pm - Take the second sachet of Picolax (mixed as before). Continue drinking of clear liquids.

On the Day of the Examination

Continue drinking clear liquids until 2 hours before your examination.

Important notes on Picolax

Possible side effects of Picolax

Picolax may cause headaches, tiredness, nausea, griping and anal pain. Isolated cases of allergic reactions and vomiting and severe diarrhoea with related symptoms have been reported. If any other symptoms occur please phone the number on top of your appointment letter, if out of hours seek medical advice.

Putting white petroleum jelly (Vaseline) around the anus helps prevent soreness.

Female Patients

If you are taking the oral contraceptive pill, diarrhoea can make it less effective. Continue taking the pill but use other precautions for the rest of that cycle.

Important: No alcohol should be drunk on the day before and the day of the examination.

If you have not had a bowel movement prior to taking Picolax or if you have any abdominal swelling or discomfort please DO NOT take Picolax without first calling the Gastroenterology Department for further advice

What to eat for your Low Residue Diet

Cereals : Crisped rice cereal, Cornflakes (no bran)

Fats : Butter, margarine (use sparingly)

Eggs : Boiled, poached

Meat/Fish : Minced or well cooked, tender lean Beef, Lamb, Ham, Veal, Pork, Poultry, Fish, Shellfish

Rice : Plain boiled white rice

Pasta : Macaroni, spaghetti, Noodles

Bread : White bread/toast

Potatoes : Boiled, creamed, mashed or plain, baked (no skins)

Cheese : Cream, cottage or cheese sauce

Dessert : Clear jelly (not red Jelly)

Instructions for Diabetics

The necessary change in your diet may affect your diabetes and your blood glucose (sugar). However, do not worry as this will not do any long-term harm. On the day before your examination you may be at the risk of having a "hypo" (too low blood sugar). When on the diet of clear fluids you should take sweet drinks every 2-3 hours during the day to avoid the problem.

We aim not to admit patients during the 2-day preparation period before their examination unless their diabetes is particularly unstable, and we hope the enclosed directions are helpful.

If you have any queries then contact the Diabetic Liaison Nurse. You should consider seeking advice if your diabetic control becomes unsatisfactory.

Patients on Hypoglycaemic Tablets.

On the Day Before the Examination.

If applicable you should carry out your usual pre-meal blood sugar monitoring

- Continue on your usual tablet regime.
- Monitor your blood sugar, every 4-6 hours
- If your blood sugar falls to around 5mmol/l or less, or if you experience hypoglycaemic symptoms, take 10-20g of carbohydrate in sugary drinks.

- If your blood sugars are too high at mealtimes (say 12mmol/l or more), despite your usual doses of tablets, you may need to reduce your quantity of sugary drinks.

On the Day Of the Examination.

Do not take your tablets on the morning of the examination, but you can take them with some food after the examination.

Patients on Insulin on the Day Before the Examination.

Twice daily insulin regime:

- If taking a twice-daily insulin regime (before breakfast and before evening meal) (e.g. Insulatard insulin, mixtard 30 insulin, Humulin I or Humulin mix 25) reduce both doses by 20-25% (but no more).

Four times per day Insulin regime:

- If taking a 4 times a day Insulin regime, then reduce the meal times doses of quick acting soluble insulin (Actrapid, Humalog S, Novorapid) by 20 - 25% (but no more).
- The bedtime dose of long acting insulin (Lantus, Levemir) remains unchanged and should be taken on the evening before the procedure.

All patients on Insulin:

- Blood Glucose testing should be done 2-4 hourly, in order to prevent the development of hypoglycaemia
- You can take 10-20g of carbohydrate in sugary drinks if your blood sugar falls to around 5 mmol/L or less, or if experiencing hypoglycaemia.

- You may need to be flexible with the amount of sugary drinks ingested; for instance, take smaller quantities than suggested above if the blood sugars are too high at mealtimes (say 12 mmol/L or more), despite your usual doses of insulin.

On the Day Of the Examination

If your examination is in the morning: do not take your usual morning dose of insulin.

Bring your insulin with you so that you can take it after the procedure, together with some food (after checking your blood sugar).

If your examination is in the afternoon: take a reduced dose of insulin (reduce doses by 25-50%) at breakfast time, together with a glucose drink. Bring your insulin with you so that you can take it after the procedure, together with some food (after checking your blood sugar).

Sugary drinks include:

- Glucose drinks - 55mls contains 10g of carbohydrate
 - Fizzy lemonade or coke - 100mls contains 10g of carbohydrate
- 1 glass (180-200mls) of glucose drinks or 2 glasses of lemonade/coke can be sipped slowly at meal times to replace your usual dietary carbohydrate.

Remember, if you have queries then contact the Diabetic Liaison Nurses for advice.

Please bring a list of your medications with you on the day of test.

Options available

If you'd like a large print, audio, Braille or a translated version of this leaflet then please call **01253 655588**.

Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)

Do you need information or advice about NHS services? Do you have concerns about you or your family's healthcare or are seeking a resolution to a problem and cannot get an answer to your questions? PALS is here to listen and support you in whatever way they can to ensure your experience of healthcare services is a positive one.

Tel: **01253 655588**
email: **pals@bfwh.nhs.uk**

You can also write to us at:
**PALS, Blackpool Victoria Hospital
Whinney Heys Road
Blackpool FY3 8NR**

Further information is available on our website: **www.bfwh.nhs.uk**

Travelling to our hospitals

For the best way to plan your journey to any of the Fylde's hospitals visit our travel website: www.bfwhospitals.nhs.uk/departments/travel/

Useful contact details

Switchboard: **01253 300000**

The Gastroenterology Unit entrance is located via the Woodlands Car Park off East Park Drive (near the golf course). There is also access via an external door off the main corridor.

If you have any problems before or after your test you can contact the Gastroenterology Unit on 01253 303043. If out of hours contact your GP or your local A&E.

Blackpool, Fylde and Wyre Hospitals
NHS Foundation Trust

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