

Helpful Tips for Preparing for a Colonoscopy

1. **Be sure to drink lots of water and other fluids to hydrate in the days before you prep.** You will feel better going through the prep process and the procedure if you are well hydrated.
2. **Plan to be at home from the time you start drinking the prep until you leave for the procedure.**
3. **Tips to make drinking the prep easier:**
 - a. Flavor it with Crystal Light. Lemon flavors work best.
 - b. You may drink the prep cold, or at room temperature. If you can tolerate cold drinks mix prep ahead of time and refrigerate (don't use ice). It is normal to feel cold or have the chills when drinking the prep cold.
 - c. If taking Colyte or similar prep, divide into two smaller containers so it doesn't look like a gallon jug.
 - d. Drink through a straw and put it as far back in your mouth as you can, without gagging, so you don't taste it.
 - e. Put a lid on the cup (so you don't smell it) or hold your nose.
 - f. To get the salty taste out of your mouth try sucking on sweet or sour items like hard candy, lollipops or lemon/lime slices or try menthol cough drops to numb the taste buds before you drink.
 - g. If you get nauseous, take a break for 15-30 minutes, and restart drinking at a slower rate.
4. **Grab a book or your iPad, and be prepared for urgent watery stool!**
 - a. Wear loose clothing; you may need to get your pants down fast!
 - b. Be prepared, sometimes the prep starts working right away. However, it can take several hours before some people have their first bowel movement. In either case, be ready to spend a lot of time on the toilet.
 - c. Apply a barrier cream, such as diaper ointment or Vaseline, to the perianal skin before bowel movements start and reapply as needed to keep the area from becoming irritated.
 - d. Use wet wipes or hemorrhoid wipes to help reduce irritation.
 - e. Keep a full water bottle or other clear liquids in the bathroom to stay hydrated, as long as you have finished drinking the prep.
 - f. Over time, the output should be getting clearer and have less solid material. You should see nothing but clear, yellow fluid with little or no sediment by the last couple of hours before your procedure. Ideally, it should look like urine.
5. **The hard part is over, now it's time to go!**
 - a. An extra pair of underwear/pants might be useful to have after the procedure.
 - b. Put a towel or other protection on the car seat.
 - c. Bring a bottle of water and a snack to enjoy in the car **AFTER** the procedure. You will be thirsty and hungry. It is better to start drinking and eating slowly rather than eating a large meal all at once.