

Preparing for Colon Surgery

You will have surgery on your colon, also called your bowel. It is important that no solid material be in your colon during the surgery. This factsheet gives step-by-step instructions to get ready for surgery.

Beginning ONE WEEK before surgery

Do not take non-steroidal anti-inflammatory (NSAID) products such as aspirin, ibuprofen, or naproxen.

A few days before surgery

Your surgery team will send prescriptions for Neomycin and Flagyl (metronidazole) to your pharmacy. Be sure to pick them up.

Buy these items over-the-counter at a pharmacy or grocery store. You will need them the day before surgery:

- Miralax® – 8.3 ounces or 238 grams
- Dulcolax® (bisacodyl) – 4 tablets
- Fleets® Saline Enema 2 bottles (118 milliliters each)
- Sports drink such as Gatorade® – 64-ounce bottle. Do not use carbonated drinks. If you have diabetes, buy a no- or low-calorie drink such as Crystal Light®.

Also be sure you have or buy what you need from the clear liquid diet list below.

ONE DAY before surgery

It is very important to follow all of the steps listed here. You will have many watery bowel movements. You may need to get to the bathroom quickly. Your colon is clean when your stool is pale yellow fluid with no solid pieces.

- First thing in the morning, start a CLEAR LIQUID DIET. Eat or drink only these foods that day:
 - Broth: Beef, chicken, or vegetable
 - Coffee (without milk)
 - Gelatin (without fruit)
 - Juice: white grape, apple, or no-pulp lemonade
 - Popsicles (without fruit or cream)
 - Sodas: diet or regular
 - Sports drinks
 - Tea (without milk)
 - Water



1 p.m. Take 4 Dulcolax (bisacodyl) tablets.



2 p.m. Mix all the Miralax in a 64-ounce bottle of Gatorade or other clear, uncarbonated liquid. Cap the bottle and shake until the powder dissolves. Refrigerate if you want a chilled drink.

After 2 p.m. Call 801-587-4300 to get your exact check-in time for surgery.



4 p.m. Start to drink the Miralax. Drink one glass every 10–15 minutes. It may be easier to drink it quickly instead of sip. Using a straw also helps. Finish ALL the Miralax in 2–4 hours.



7 p.m. Take 2 Neomycin tablets and 1 Flagyl (metronidazole) tablet.



9 p.m. Take 2 Neomycin tablets and 1 Flagyl (metronidazole) tablet.



11 p.m. Take 2 Neomycin tablets and 1 Flagyl (metronidazole) tablet.

After midnight

- Do not have anything to eat or drink. You may gargle or rinse your mouth, but do not swallow any liquid.
- Do not use tobacco or e-cigarettes.

ONE HOUR before leaving home, day of surgery

Use both bottles of Fleets enema, one at a time.

1. Lie down on your left side with knees bent. You may want a thick towel or disposable pad under you to protect the bedding or floor.
2. Remove the cap from the first bottle and gently insert the applicator tip into your rectum.
3. Slowly squeeze the bottle to empty it in your rectum. It is okay if a little liquid stays in the bottle.
4. Keeping the same position, hold the liquid in for 15–20 minutes, if possible. Then go to the toilet.
5. Right away, repeat steps 1–4 with the second bottle.
6. Your colon will be clear and ready for surgery.