

# Preparing for a colonoscopy with CoLyte or PegLyte



**You will soon undergo a test at the Endoscopy Service. This fact sheet explains what this test is for and how to prepare for it.**

## What is a colonoscopy?

It's a test that allows the doctor to see inside the colon and rectum with a camera.

## What does this test involve?

Before starting, you will be given a mild sedative. It will help you to relax and will reduce discomfort during the test. Then the doctor will insert a flexible tube the size of a finger through the anus. The test takes about 20 minutes.

## Are there any risks?

Colonoscopy is generally safe. The risks are very low.

- In rare cases, there is bleeding.
- In very rare cases, the wall of the digestive tract may be pierced (perforation).

A nurse monitors your condition throughout the examination to avoid these risks.

## Are there any contraindications?

There are very few. This is assessed on a case-by-case basis. However, if you're pregnant or think you may be pregnant, the nurse should be told about it. If you have not already discussed it, call the nurse at the number given on page 2 of this sheet.

## How do I prepare for the test?

There are several things you need to do before the test.

### MEDICATIONS

Call the nurse at the number provided on page 2 if you're taking any of the following medications:

- medications that make the blood thinner, such as anticoagulants and antiplatelet drugs
- medications for diabetes

The nurse will tell you what to do if you're taking any of these. Other medications can be taken as usual unless your doctor tells you otherwise.

### SUPPLEMENTS



**Don't take iron supplements during the 7 days before the test.**



## SPECIAL DIET

It's very important that you follow this diet so the doctor can see your colon properly. Otherwise, the test may have to be repeated.

### For 3 days before the test, don't eat:

- whole grain bread and pasta (such as multigrain bread), whole grain cereals, brown rice
- milk, dairy products, or substitutes (soy milk, almond milk, etc.)
- fruits and vegetables
- legumes (red beans, lentils, chickpeas, etc.)
- nuts and seeds
- chips, popcorn, coconut, jams, sauces

## PREPARATION ON THE DAY BEFORE THE EXAM

This step is done to clean your intestine of any trace of food. Follow the instructions in the appendix on pages 3 and 4.

## What should I bring on the day of the test?

- > Your up-to-date health insurance card.
- > A complete and up-to-date list of your medications provided by your pharmacist



Leave your jewelry, piercings, and valuable items at home.

## How much time will I need for this test?

Altogether, you should plan on at least 4 hours.

*The content of this document in no way replaces the recommendations and diagnoses made, or the treatment suggested by your health professional.*



You must be accompanied for your return home. A family member or friend should also stay with you for 24 hours afterwards. Your attention will be impaired because of the sedative for 24 hours. During this period:

- Don't drive a vehicle (car, motorcycle, bicycle)
- Don't use dangerous tools
- Don't make any important decisions

## What happens after the test is finished?

You will stay for about 30 minutes to be sure all is well. A doctor will meet with you and give you information about your follow-up.

## Who do I talk to if I have questions?

You can call the Endoscopy Service, Monday to Friday between 9 a.m. and 3 p.m.:

📞 514 890-8356



### USEFUL RESOURCES

Other health sheets published by the CHUM are available. Ask for those that might fit your situation.



You can also find them on our web site  
[chumontreal.qc.ca/fiches-sante](http://chumontreal.qc.ca/fiches-sante)

To find out more about the Centre hospitalier de l'Université de Montréal  
[chumontreal.qc.ca](http://chumontreal.qc.ca)

The day before the test (after your diet), follow the steps described in this appendix one by one. The instructions are different depending on whether your test is in the morning or afternoon. Make sure you have all the items needed.

### ITEMS NEEDED

#### Laxatives

You can buy these at a pharmacy.



- 4 litres of CoLyte or PegLyte



- 2 Dulcolax tablets

#### Clear liquids

You will need to drink plenty of fluids. To not interfere with the test, these liquids must be clear (it should be possible to see through them). Have some of these clear liquids on hand:

- Water
- Apple juice, white grape juice, white cranberry juice
- Chicken or vegetable broth
- Ginger Ale, 7 Up
- Tea, tisane (herbal tea)
- Jell-O (not red)



**Note.** Don't drink only water.



#### ATTENTION!

Examples of liquids you should **NOT** drink:

- Milk
- Orange, plum and grape juice (white grape juice is okay)
- Beef broth
- Dark carbonated drinks (such as Coke, Pepsi)



## My test is scheduled for the MORNING

### The day before the test

- > Don't eat breakfast, lunch or supper.
- > Drink clear liquids all day long (see examples on page 3). You can drink as much as you want.
- > **Between 4 p.m. and 8 p.m.:** Drink 3 litres of CoLyte or PegLyte (1 glass every 15 minutes).

**If you feel nauseous (feel like vomiting) or if you feel too bloated, drink more slowly.**

- > **At 9:00 p.m.:** Take the 2 tablets of Dulcolax.



### The morning of the test

- > **4 hours to 5 hours** before your appointment, get up to drink the last litre of CoLyte or PegLyte (one glass every 15 minutes).
- > Don't eat breakfast.
- > Clear liquids are allowed up to 3 hours before the time of your test.

## My test is scheduled for the AFTERNOON

### The day before the test

- > Eat a very light breakfast (such as 2 slices of toast with nothing on them).
- > Don't eat lunch or supper.
- > Drink clear liquids all day long (see examples on page 3). You can drink as much as you want.
- > **Between 6 p.m. and 8 p.m.:** Drink 2 litres of CoLyte or PegLyte (1 glass every 15 minutes).

**If you feel nauseous (feel like vomiting) or if you feel too bloated, drink more slowly.**

- > **At 9:00 p.m.:** Take the 2 tablets of Dulcolax.



### The morning of the test

- > Don't eat breakfast.
- > **4 to 5 hours before your appointment:** Drink the 2 last litres of CoLyte or PegLyte (one glass every 15 minutes, early enough depending on when you leave).
- > Clear liquids are allowed up to 3 hours before the time of your test.

To find out more about the Centre hospitalier de l'Université de Montréal  
[chumontreal.qc.ca](http://chumontreal.qc.ca)