

Your colonoscopy prep checklist

bottoms
up

aga American Gastroenterological Association

Starting your colonoscopy prep journey is all about planning and preparation. Let's get you set up for success!

Talk to your doctor

- Discuss your colonoscopy prep options.
- Ask about dietary restrictions and when you should start your colonoscopy prep diet.
- Ask about approved liquids to take with your prep.



Sample questions:

- What type of prep do you recommend?
- Are there any specific foods or drinks I should avoid and when should I start?

Read your colonoscopy prep instructions



Read the instructions several days in advance so you have time to ask questions and feel fully prepared for your prep process.

Prep scheduled: Time to stock up!

Your prep date is marked on the calendar! Time to gather supplies and steer clear of some common pitfalls.

Make a shopping list



Stock up on quality toilet paper.



Load up on clear fluids (i.e., broth, water, approved sports drinks).



Grab wet wipes and soothing ointment/moisturizer.



Buy snacks permitted on a clear liquid diet, like certain popsicles, Italian ice and clear hard candy.

Avoid common mistakes



- Finish your dose as the doctor prescribed.
- Avoid eating foods not allowed by your doctor.
- Do not add unapproved flavorings to the prep or drink unapproved liquids (no red or purple coloring!).

Set reminders



Schedule when to start your prep process (bright and early is the way to go!).

Three days before: The big day approaches

Three days before your colonoscopy be sure to mentally prepare, stay hydrated and follow dietary guidelines.

Remember, you take prep to clean your colon. You will have diarrhea multiple times. This is important because an empty colon can ensure your health care provider gets a clear view of your colon's lining and the most accurate diagnosis. You've got this!

Double-check instructions



- Read your colonoscopy prep instructions a few times to ensure you understand each step.
- Call your health care provider's office if you have any questions.

Hydrate



- Drink plenty of clear fluids to stay hydrated.

Create a comfortable space



- Set the mood with a playlist of calming music.
- Prepare a cozy spot near the bathroom with blankets and pillows.

Stay close to the bathroom



- Be prepared to spend some time near the bathroom once you start the prep solution.
- Cue up a riveting podcast, binge-worthy show or a stack of good books to pass the time.

Ask for support



- Reach out to your health care team if you have any questions or concerns.

Colon is clean: Post-prep and procedure

You did it! Now it's time to celebrate a successful colonoscopy and focus on recovery.

Focus on recovery



- After your colonoscopy, prioritize rest and hydration.
- Drink plenty of clear fluids to replenish your body.
- Consider light, easy-to-digest meals to ease back into eating.
- Follow any additional post-procedure instructions provided by your health care team.

Get out of the house



- Once you feel ready, take a walk or engage in a light activity to get some fresh air.

Treat yourself



- Plan a post-colonoscopy treat or activity to look forward to.
- Consider your favorite meal or a fun activity as a reward.

Celebrate your success



- Recognize the importance of what you've done for your health and well-being!