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Endoscopy preparation instructions

Good preparation is the most important factor for a successful, accurate endoscopy. Read these instructions a week before your appointment and download the printable copy.

Your appointment Date: _____ Time: _____

Procedure: ☐ Upper endoscopy ☐ Colonoscopy

Upper endoscopy (gastroscopy)

Upper GI

Gastroscopy does not require bowel preparation — the stomach simply needs to be empty.

6–8 hours before

- Stop eating completely.
- Do not chew gum or smoke.

2 hours before

- Water only is allowed until 2 hours before your appointment, unless told otherwise.

Morning medications

- Usual blood-pressure and heart medicines can be taken with a sip of water, after confirming with the clinic.
- Diabetes medicines and blood thinners need specific instructions (see Medications).

Lower endoscopy (colonoscopy)

Lower GI

A successful colonoscopy depends on a completely clean bowel; poor preparation can hide important findings or mean the procedure has to be repeated.

3 days before

- Avoid high-fibre foods: fruit and vegetables with skins, seeds, nuts, whole grains, corn and legumes.
- Allowed: white bread, white rice, pasta, eggs, boiled chicken and fish, low-fat dairy.

The day before

- From the morning: clear fluids only — water, strained broth, pulp-free apple juice, tea or coffee without milk, sports drinks.
- Avoid red or purple liquids, milk, and juices with pulp.
- Start your bowel-prep solution in the evening, as prescribed and timed by the clinic.

Procedure day

- Take the second dose in the morning as instructed, finishing at least 2 hours before your appointment.
- Nothing by mouth after that.

Sign of good prep

- Your stool should become clear, light-yellow liquid with no solid matter. If not, contact the clinic before your appointment.

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Medications: tell the clinic in advance

Blood thinners
Such as warfarin, clopidogrel, apixaban and rivaroxaban. Do not stop them yourself — this will be decided with the doctor and your prescribing physician.

Diabetes medicines & insulin
Doses usually need adjusting while fasting to avoid low blood sugar.

Iron tablets
Usually stopped 5–7 days before colonoscopy as they make the view harder.

Allergies & pregnancy
Tell the clinic about any drug or anaesthetic allergies, or if you may be pregnant.

Procedure day

- Bring your ID, insurance card, a list of your medications and any previous reports.
- A companion is required; do not drive for the rest of the day because of sedation.
- Wear comfortable clothes and leave jewellery at home.
- Arrive 30 minutes before your appointment.

After the procedure

- Mild bloating or wind is common and settles within hours.
- Start with a light meal once the sedation wears off, unless told otherwise.
- Initial findings are explained after the procedure; biopsy results usually take a few days.

Contact the clinic immediately if you have

- Severe or worsening abdominal pain.
- Fever or chills.
- Rectal bleeding of more than a few drops, or black stool.
- Repeated vomiting or vomiting blood.

These are general instructions. Always follow the specific instructions the clinic gives you for your case and your prescribed prep solution.