

PREPARE FOR YOUR COLONOSCOPY



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As you prepare for your colonoscopy, it is important you carefully read and understand the following information. The aim of preparing is to ensure that the colon is empty and clean before the procedure. If you have any questions about this procedure, please let your doctor or nurse know.

What is a colonoscopy?

A colonoscopy is a simple procedure to check the inside of your colon (bowel). A colonoscopy is done as a day procedure and does **not** require you to stay overnight.

The procedure involves:

- Being sedated by an anaesthetist. During sedation, many people sleep while others are very relaxed, comfortable, and generally not aware.
- When sedated, a doctor will guide a small, special camera through and up your anus (back passage) to check the health of your colon. The camera is on a thin, soft-coated, flexible tube and is called an endoscope.
- For the images to be clear, it is important that your colon (bowel) is empty. To do this, you must prepare before your colonoscopy.

Before your colonoscopy

You will need to buy a bowel preparation kit from a pharmacy. The bowel preparation kit is called PICOPREP 3.

Information about the kit includes:

- It costs roughly \$15.00
- No prescription is needed to buy it
- It contains three sachets (small bags) in a box, along with the instructions.

The kit instructions explain how to make the three drinks you must have. It is important to discuss any questions you have about the instructions with your pharmacist **before** you have the drinks.

Important bowel preparation kit information

The drinks are designed to help you clear out your bowel. It is important you note the following:

- The drinks in the kit will make you go to the toilet many times. This is essential.
- You will start going to the toilet within two to three hours of drinking the PICOPREP 3 mixture but this can vary from person to person.
- Eventually you will just pass water from your anus (back passage).

Special advice for you

We advise, that when taking PICOPREP 3, that you **stay home**. It is important you:

- Are close to a toilet.
- Remain active. Continue with your normal routine around your home.
- Do **not** spend too much time lying around in bed or on the couch. Doing this reduces the success of your bowel preparation.

Two days before your colonoscopy

Two days **before** starting PICOPREP 3, you will need to **stop** eating the following foods:

- high fibre and/or seeded bread.
- breakfast cereals including muesli and porridge.
- all vegetables, except pumpkin and potato.
- any foods that contain seeds such as jams, tomatoes and kiwi fruit.

Foods you **may eat** are:

- regular (not high fibre) white bread
- steamed fish
- boiled chicken
- jelly
- well-cooked and peeled pumpkin or potato.

Fasting for your colonoscopy

The night before your colonoscopy, you will have been fasting (stopped eating), as per the instructions of the PICOPREP 3 kit.

During your fasting time, you:

- may drink clear fluids for up to two hours before you arrive. Clear fluids are:
 - Water
 - Black tea or black coffee
 - Clear pulp-free juice such as apple juice

Please have only approximately 200mls per hour of clear fluids).

On the day of your procedure, it is important you:

- do **not** drink any alcohol.
- do **not** smoke or use any nicotine replacement therapies.

What to expect after the colonoscopy

When you have recovered from sedation you will:

- get dressed and wait until you are ready to go home. While you wait, you will receive home care instructions from our nurses.
 - Our nurses will contact your support person and let them know what is going on.
- receive a copy of your colonoscopy report before you leave. Your doctor will also be happy to explain any significant findings that require follow up.

Going home after your colonoscopy

The medicine used for sedation can still be in your body. It may cause you to feel lightheaded or dizzy.

For this reason, you **must have** a responsible adult to:

- take you home
- stay with you overnight.

For 24 to 48 hours after your colonoscopy, you should **not**:

- drive a car or operate heavy machinery
- drink alcohol
- cook
- be home alone
- sign any legal documents.

When at home, please follow any instructions you received before you left Peter Mac.

You may also need to attend a follow-up appointment. Your nurse will give you these details before you go home.

When to call Peter Mac

Please call us if you experience any of the following signs:

- any discomfort is getting worse
- you have chills, sweats or are feeling unusually cold
- a temperature above 38 degrees or below 36 degrees
- a rapid heartbeat or fast breathing
- vomiting or diarrhoea
- unable to eat or drink for more than 24 hours
- unusual or non-stop bleeding .



How to contact us

If you are experiencing any signs of concern, please call us on (03) 8559 5000.

Ask for your Specialist Nurse if calling during business hours:

- Monday to Friday
- 8:00am to 5:00pm

Ask for the Patient Services Manager (PSM) if calling:

- After Hours
- Weekends
- Public Holidays

In the event of an emergency, please dial **000** for an ambulance or go to your nearest hospital emergency department.