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Q: What exactly are clear liquids?

A: A clear liquid is generally considered one that you can see through to the other side. Acceptable clear liquids include: water, tea, Apple juice, Ginger ale, Sprite, 7UP, Gatorade, Powerade, Vitamin Water, Crystal Light. Black coffee is considered a clear liquid. However, milk and cream are not considered clear liquid and please do not add them to your coffee. Please be sure to avoid any red liquids. If you have soup, you may have the broth, but no chicken, noodles or vegetables are allowed.

Q: Why should I avoid red liquids?

A: The red color can pass into the colon and potentially look like blood.

Q: One of the medications I was instructed to take the morning of my procedure is red, is it OK to take it?

A: Yes. Medications for blood pressure, heart medications and seizures should be taken the morning of your procedure regardless of their color.

Q. What time should I start my prep?

A: You will need to be on a clear liquid diet the entire day before your procedure; however, you won't need to start your prep until sometime between 12:00 noon and 6:00 PM in the day. You should receive full instructions from our office instructing you on when exactly you should start. You will need to use the bathroom frequently once you start the prep, so you might want to be at home before starting.

Q: I was instructed to take a bowel preparation including laxatives such as Miralax or Citrate of Magnesium, but I do not have a prescription. What should I do?

A: Miralax, Dulcolax, Citrate of Magnesium are all available over the counter and can be purchased without a prescription. Please remember to avoid taking any of these medications with red liquids or any cherry flavor.

Q: Is there any way I can make this taste better?

A: You can try sucking on hard candy, or you can rinse your mouth with water, mouthwash or any other beverage listed on the Clear Liquid Diet. The bowel preparation may be easier to drink if you drink it through a straw.

Q: I feel like vomiting and don't think I can drink any more. What should I do?

A: Without a clean bowel, the doctor will not be able to see the inside of your colon to complete the examination. Therefore, you need to finish your bowel preparation to

accomplish a thorough, complete evaluation. If you do vomit or feel nauseated, wait at least one hour and begin trying to drink the solution again. Walking and other activities usually decrease nausea. Some patients prefer to remove the prep from the refrigerator a half-hour before they are scheduled to start drinking it while others feel it is easier to drink if it is very cold. If you try the above suggestions, but your nausea and vomiting have not improved, please call us.

Q: I vomited after drinking (some or all) of my bowel preparation. Can I still have my procedure?

A: This largely depends on how much of your bowel preparation you could drink and how well it works to clean out your colon. In general, if you could drink more than 75% of your bowel preparation and are passing liquid only bowel movements, then the preparation was likely adequate. If you were only able to drink less than 75% of your bowel preparation or if your stools are at all solid, then you will need to drink additional liquids to cleanse your bowel or reschedule your procedure.

Q: I drank most of the solution but have not gone to the bathroom yet. What should I do?

A: Most people have a bowel movement after an hour while some patients take 2 hours or longer. If you feel bloated or nauseated, wait 30-45 minutes and resume drinking the solution. If you still have not had a bowel movement after drinking all the solution, please call us for further instructions.

Q: Is the Prep the only liquid I need to drink prior to the procedure?

A: No, please drink an additional 4 to 8 glasses of liquids so you do not become dehydrated. The colon prep liquid is to clean out the colon; not to replace fluid loss. Please follow the instructions in the bowel preparation

Q: I am taking the prep and now have loose, watery stools. Do I still need to take the rest of the prep?

A: Yes, you may have solid stool higher in the colon that needs to be eliminated as well.

Q: I already have diarrhea before taking the prep, do I still have to take the laxative?

A: Yes, you must take the prep as directed by your doctor. Your colon is approximately 6 feet long, and your entire colon must be emptied for your physician to see it clearly.

Q: I see yellow color in the toilet bowl and a few flecks. What do I do?

A: If you drank the entire solution or if your last bowel movement was clear enough to see the bottom of the toilet, you should be fine. It is OK if you have some flecks of material. The yellow color is the result of bile that normally colors the feces. This should not interfere with the examination.

Q: I am a diabetic and take insulin and other diabetic meds. Do I need to adjust my dose or hold my meds?

A: Yes, you will likely need to adjust your dose of your diabetic medication and insulin so your blood sugar levels do not drop too low while you stop eating food prior to your procedure. Please check with your doctor who prescribes this medication (your Primary Care Doctor or Endocrinologist) for advice on how to manage these medications prior to your procedure.

Q: I see that I was supposed to stop one or more of my medications (such as blood thinners) prior to my procedure. However, I forgot. Can I still have my procedure?

A: It depends on what medication you are on and what type of procedure is planned. Please call our office to review this with the doctor who will be performing your procedure.

Q: My bottom is very sore. What can I do?

A: To clean the area, avoid rubbing, but gently pat with a wet washcloth or moistened wipe. Apply Vaseline [™], Preparation H [™], or Desitin liberally.

Q: Is it OK to drink alcoholic beverages?

A: We strongly suggest you do not drink any alcoholic beverages prior to your procedure since they can cause dehydration, and some wines may thin your blood.

Q: Can I drink any nutritional supplements?

A: You may have any supplement as long as it does not contain milk or dairy.

Q: Can I chew gum or suck candy?

A: Yes, but no hard candy with soft centers or anything with red colors.

Q: Can I brush my teeth?

A. Yes.

Q: Can I wear my dentures?

A. Yes, you may wear your dentures to the Endoscopy suite. However, you may be asked to remove them prior to the procedure.

Q. I have been instructed not to take anti-inflammatory or blood thinner medications several days before the procedure. What can I take for headaches and pain relief?

A: You may take Tylenol as needed. Please follow dosing recommendations as labeled.