

Bowel Preparation for Colonoscopy or Bowel Surgery

Thorough bowel preparation is essential for a safe and complete colonoscopy. Poor preparation may require the procedure to be repeated. Please read this guide carefully and contact our rooms with any questions: 03 9816 3951.

Step 1 — Choose Your Preparation (Purchase from your pharmacy – no prescription required)

PICOPREP

For patients **under 75** in good general health.
Low-volume — easier to drink.

MOVIPREP

Recommended for patients **over 75** or with heart, kidney, or liver problems. Also suitable for all ages. Chill well and drink slowly.

⚠ Please notify our rooms before your procedure if any of the following apply:

- Stop iron supplements at least 3 days before your procedure, as they interfere with bowel preparation.
- If you take blood thinners (warfarin, rivaroxaban, apixaban, dabigatran, or clopidogrel), please contact our rooms before your procedure — these may need to be paused or bridged.
- If you take oral or injectable diabetic medications (e.g. Metformin, Diamicron, Jardiance, Forxiga), stop these 2 days before your procedure. Do not stop insulin — contact our rooms for personalised fasting and dose adjustment instructions.
- If you use a weight-loss injectable (e.g. Ozempic, Saxenda, Wegovy), remain on clear fluids for the full 24 hours before your procedure.

Step 2 — The Day Before: Diet & Preparation Schedule

For 2–3 days before, follow a low-residue diet (see page 2). Your preparation schedule below depends on whether your procedure is in the morning or afternoon — check your appointment letter.

MORNING PROCEDURE (admission before midday)

Until 3pm — White foods only

Eggs, skinless chicken or fish, white bread, white rice, plain pasta (e.g. mac & cheese), plain yoghurt.

After 3pm — Clear fluids only

Water, clear broth, Bonox, pulp-free juice, plain cordial or lemonade (not red/green), jelly or ice blocks (not red/green), orange/yellow Gatorade.

AFTERNOON PROCEDURE (admission after midday)

Until 6pm — White foods only

Eggs, skinless chicken or fish, white bread, white rice, plain pasta (e.g. mac & cheese), plain yoghurt.

After 6pm — Clear fluids only

Water, clear broth, Bonox, pulp-free juice, plain cordial or lemonade (not red/green), jelly or ice blocks (not red/green), orange/yellow Gatorade.

PICOPREP Schedule

Evening — the day before your colonoscopy

2pm

Mix one PicoPrep sachet in 250ml warm water and refrigerate. You can mix all three sachets now.

5pm (morning scope) 7pm (afternoon scope)

Drink first glass of PicoPrep. Continue clear fluids. Expect bowel activity within 1–3 hours — watery motions are normal.

8pm (morning scope)

Drink second glass of PicoPrep. Continue clear fluids.

Morning of your colonoscopy

5am (morning scope) 6–7am (afternoon scope)

Drink final glass of PicoPrep then 3–4 glasses of clear fluid. Take your usual tablets with a small amount of water. 9am (afternoon scope): drink one further glass of PicoPrep then 3–4 glasses of clear fluid.

MOVIPREP Schedule

3–4pm

Mix sachet A + B into 1 litre of water and refrigerate. Mix the second litre now and refrigerate.

5pm (morning scope) 7pm (afternoon scope)

Drink 1 litre of MoviPrep over one hour. Follow with 3–4 glasses of clear fluid.

Before bed

Refrigerate the second litre of MoviPrep overnight, if not already done.

5am (morning scope) 8am (afternoon scope)

Drink second litre of MoviPrep then 3–4 glasses of clear fluid. Take your usual tablets with a small amount of water.

Stop all fluids 2 hours before your scheduled arrival time at the hospital or endoscopy unit, then fast completely.

If you experience severe nausea, vomiting, or cannot complete your preparation, call us immediately on 03 9816 3951.

Step 2 — Low-Residue Diet (2–3 days before your procedure)

Reduce dietary fibre to begin clearing your bowel. This makes your preparation more effective and your colonoscopy safer. Avoid the foods in the right column, and remember: most fruit and vegetables are excluded — if in doubt, leave it out.

Food Group	✓ You CAN eat	✗ Avoid
Meat, fish & eggs	Skinless chicken or fish fillet, eggs (any style)	Red meat, processed meats, skin-on poultry
Bread & grains	White bread, white rice, plain pasta, couscous, noodles, cornflakes, rice bubbles, plain biscuits	Wholemeal or seeded bread, brown rice, wholemeal pasta, Weetbix, Cheerios, digestive biscuits, dried fruit or nut bars
Fruit & vegetables	Well-cooked peeled pumpkin, peeled potato, ripe bananas only. Most other fruit and vegetables are not permitted.	All other fresh, cooked, tinned or dried fruit and vegetables — including beans, lentils, peas, corn, and pulses
Dairy (small amounts only)	Milk, plain white yoghurt, mild white cheese (e.g. ricotta, cottage cheese), butter, plain ice cream, milk puddings	Strongly coloured cheeses (cheddar, blue cheese), any dairy containing fruit, nuts, or herbs
Drinks	Clear fruit juice (no pulp), plain cordial, sparkling water, tea or coffee with a small dash of milk. Avoid red or purple coloured drinks.	Red or purple coloured drinks, smoothies, fruit juices with pulp. (Red/purple colours can be mistaken for blood during the procedure.)
Other	Boiled sweets (e.g. barley sugar, ginger drops), salt, pepper, mild spices, consommé	Sweets with fruit, nuts, or seeds; anything with red or purple food colouring (can obscure the view during your colonoscopy)

What to Expect During Your Preparation

Bowel activity

Movements typically begin 1–3 hours after your first dose. Motions will become progressively watery — this means the preparation is working.

Skin comfort

Frequent motions can cause anal soreness. Apply Vaseline or nappy rash cream (Sudocreme, Bepanthen) around the anus before you begin, and reapply as needed.

Nausea

Mild nausea is common, especially with MoviPrep. Chill it well and drink slowly. Call us if nausea is severe or you vomit repeatedly.

Hydration

Aim for one glass (250ml) of clear fluid every 30–60 minutes while awake. Orange or yellow Gatorade or Powerade is recommended to replace electrolytes.

Medications

Continue your usual blood pressure, heart, and other regular medications with a sip of water. Hold diabetic medications, iron, and blood thinners as instructed — see Step 1 warnings.

When to call us

Call 03 9816 3951 if nothing happens after 3 hours, you cannot keep fluids down, feel unwell, or have any concerns.

What counts as a clear fluid?

Any liquid you can see through when held to the light. Avoid red and green — these colours can be mistaken for blood or bile during your procedure.

- Water (still or sparkling)
- Clear broth, consommé, or Bonox
- Pulp-free apple, grape, or pear juice
- Plain jelly or ice blocks (not red/green)
- Plain cordial or lemonade (not red/green)
- Orange or yellow Gatorade — recommended
- Tea or coffee with a small dash of milk only
- Sparkling water or plain mineral water

Not sure about anything? Just call us — 03 9816 3951

We are happy to help with questions about your preparation, medications, or what to expect. If you cannot complete your preparation or feel unwell, do not wait — call us straight away.