Royal United Hospitals Bath
NHS Foundation Trust

Double Prep: BowelPreparation for colonoscopy or sigmoidoscopy

For a Morning Appointment

Please read this patient information leaflet carefully at least ten days in advance of your colonoscopy or sigmoidoscopy

What is bowel preparation?

Bowel preparation is the term used to describe the use of medicines, known as laxatives, to clear the bowel, so we can achieve a thorough examination of your large bowel (colon).

Why do I need bowel preparation?

The bowel needs to be really clean to get an accurate diagnosis. Even small amounts of stool, can hide abnormalities of the bowel wall. Sometimes, if the bowel preparation is inadequate, the examination (colonoscopy or sigmoidoscopy) may need to be rearranged for another occasion.

Which bowel preparation am I taking?

You have been prescribed **Double Prep (Picolax and Plenvu)**; three days of changes to your diet are also essential before taking the Double Prep, and your regular medications may be affected.

What to expect?

'*Double Prep'* is a strong laxative combination of '*Picolax'* and '*Plenvu* and will cause frequent, watery bowel movements. '*Picolax'* may take up to 3 hours to work*, 'Plenvu'* can take around 15 - 60 minutes to begin to work, so we recommend you stay close to a toilet.

Side Effects

The following side effects can occur:

- Abdominal cramps and bloating
- Nausea, vomiting
- Anal irritation (use of a topical barrier cream e.g. Sudocrem can be helpful)
- Headache and dizziness (these may occur due to dehydration; drinking water can help)

Serious reactions, such as an allergy '*Picolax'* to and/ or '*Plenvu'*, are rare. Symptoms of an allergy include a rash, itching, wheezing, swelling of the face and / or difficulty breathing. If you experience any signs of an allergic reaction, seek urgent medical attention by calling **999**.

What about my other medications?

If you have **diabetes** which is controlled with insulin or tablets, please ensure you have received a diabetic information leaflet and that the endoscopy team are aware. You can call 01225 821425 or 821788, on a Monday to Friday between 08.00 and 17.00, or discuss your diabetes at your pre-assessment appointment.

Diabetes Info QR

If you are taking **anti-platelet or anti-coagulation medication (blood thinners)**, please contact the endoscopy unit on 01225 821425 or 821788 or discuss this at your pre-assessment appointment, you may have already discussed them with the person arranging the colonoscopy. If not, please contact the endoscopy unit on 01225 821425 or 821788 or discuss this at your pre-assessment appointment.

If you take an oral contraceptive 'the pill', laxatives such as '*Picolax'* and '*Plenvu'* can stop it from working. Continue taking the pill but **use additional contraception for the remainder of your cycle** after taking '*Double Prep'*.

For all other essential prescribed medications, you may take these with a little water. Avoid taking any medication **1 hour before or after** '*Double Prep'*.

Once you receive your appointment

- Ensure you have the bowel preparation; this is often sent in the post if you didn't already collect it from the hospital e.g. at a clinic appointment.
- Follow information in this leaflet, rather than the leaflet in the medication box, as this achieves a better bowel preparation (a cleaner bowel).

7 days before your appointment



- If you are taking iron tablets, please stop these seven days before the examination. You can restart them afterwards.
- If you are taking medication to control diarrhoea, stop taking these until after the examination; common examples include Loperamide (also known as Immodium) or medication containing Codeine.
- There is no need to adjust other regular medications.
- If you take medications that cause constipation such as opiate analgesia (e.g. Codeine, Tramadol, Oxycodone or Morphine) or other pain management (such as Pregabalin, Amitriptylline or Gabapentin) regularly please discuss this at the time of your pre-assessment appointment. You are likely to need additional bowel preparation, for example, you may be advised to have 5 - 7 days of Senna up to four tablets at night before the colonoscopy; Senna, also known as Senokot, can be bought over the counter without a prescription.

3 days before your appointment

- For 3 days before the colonoscopy, the dietary changes described in your colonoscopy booklet. It consists of foods that are easy to digest and avoids high fibre foods, leaving less residue in your bowel, so we can attain clearer views. ***Please see the list of food allowed and to avoid in your Colonoscopy booklet.***

2 days before the colonoscopy

- Have breakfast compatible with colonoscopy leaflet dietary advice.
- **After 10am you can have NO MORE FOOD until after your examination.** You can continue to have clear fluids (listed below) until 1 day before your procedure.
    - Clear fluids include water or flavoured water, tea and coffee **without milk**, clear soup e.g. consommé, fruit juice without bits, squash (**not** red/ purple), clear fizzy drinks e.g. lemonade and Bovril or Oxo.
- **At 10am, take your first dose of <u>Picolax.</u>**
    - Mix one sachet in 150ml of cold tap water.
    - Stir for 2-3 minutes.
    - Drink the solution **over 20 minutes**. If the solution becomes hot, wait until it cools sufficiently to drink.
    - Aim to drink 250ml of fluid every hour after taking '*Picolax'* to replace fluid lost through bowel movements, more if desired.
    - Drinking through a straw can be helpful.
    - The addition of cordial to alter the flavour can be helpful, but please **avoid blackcurrant cordial.**
    - You may begin to pass frequent loose motions; please stay near a toilet at this time.

DOSE 1 of PLENVU at 6PM



(ALT Text)
Empty the contents of 'Dose 1' into a measuring container that holds 500ml of fluid.



(ALT Text)
Add water to make up to 500ml and stir until the powder has dissolved. This this may take up to eight minutes.



(ALT Text)
Sip slowly all the dissolved mixture **over 60 minutes** until you have drunk it all. There is no need to rush.

- Drink a further 500ml of clear fluid must be drunk over the next 60 minutes.
- Drinking through a straw can be helpful.

- The addition of cordial to alter the flavour can be helpful, but please **avoid blackcurrant cordial.**
- You may begin to pass frequent loose motions; please stay near a toilet at this time.

'Picolax' and *'Plenvu' will cause diarrhoea so stay close to a toilet. It can take up to 2 hours to work.*

A barrier cream e.g. Sudocrem or petroleum jelly can help prevent soreness around bottom.

Use moist wipes or toilet paper after opening your bowels to reduce the skin irritation. ***Wet wipes must be disposed of in a bin, not put in the toilet.***

1 day before your procedure

- **At 10am, take your second dose of <u>Picolax</u>**
  - Follow the same instructions for your second dose, as for the first dose.

DOSE 2 of PLENVU at 6PM



(ALT Text)
Empty the contents of **'Dose 2 – 2 packets A&B'** into a measuring container that holds 500ml of fluid.



(ALT Text)
Add water to make up to 500ml and stir until the powder has dissolved. This this may take up to eight minutes.



(ALT Text)
Sip slowly all the dissolved mixture **over 60 minutes** until you have drunk it all. There is no need to rush.

  - Drink a further 500ml of clear fluid must be drunk over the next 60 minutes.
  - Alternating between plenvu and clear fluid is acceptable.

On the day of the colonoscopy

- **Before 7am** if you take regular medications, take them with a sip of water.
- **You can have NO MORE FOOD until after your examination.**
- You can drink clear fluids until 2 hours before your appointment.
- **From 2 hours before your appointment DO NOT DRINK until after your examination.**
  If you are also having Gastroscopy (Upper GI Endoscopy) at the same time, then DO NOT DRINK anything from <u>6 hours</u> before your test.

Questions, concerns and queries

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact the Endoscopy Unit on 01225 821425 or 821788, on a Monday to Friday between 08.00 and 17.00.

Please contact the Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) if you require this leaflet in a different format or would like to feed back your experience of the hospital.
Email ruh-tr.pals@nhs.net or telephone 01225 825656 or 826319.

Royal United Hospitals Bath NHS Foundation Trust
Combe Park, Bath, BA1 3NG

01225 428331 | www.ruh.nhs.uk

Date of publication: January 2025 | Ref: RUH GAS/163
© Royal United Hospitals Bath NHS Foundation Trust