



PATIENT & CAREGIVER EDUCATION

Bowel Preparation for Your Gynecologic Surgery

This information explains how to do a bowel preparation (clear the poop from your body) before your gynecologic surgery.

Buy Supplies

Buy the following supplies from any pharmacy. You don't need a prescription.

- 1 (238-gram) bottle of polyethylene glycol (MiraLAX®)
- 1 (64-ounce) bottle of a clear liquid. For examples of clear liquids, read the "Follow a clear liquid diet" section.
- Extra clear liquids to drink while you're following a clear liquid diet

Your healthcare provider may have sent prescriptions for the following antibiotics to your pharmacy:

- Metronidazole (Flagyl®, Metrogel®) 500 milligram tablets
- Neomycin (Neo-Fradin®) 500 milligram tablets

Be sure to also pick up these antibiotics, if needed.

The Day Before Your Surgery

Follow a clear liquid diet

You'll need to follow a clear liquid diet the day before your surgery. You can find examples in the "Clear Liquid Diet" table. While you're following this diet:

- Don't eat any solid foods.
- Try to drink at least 1 (8-ounce) glass of clear liquid every hour while you're awake.
- Drink different types of clear liquids. Don't just drink water, black coffee, and tea.
- Don't drink sugar-free clear liquids unless you have diabetes and a member of your care team tells you to.

For people with diabetes

Ask the healthcare provider who manages your diabetes what to do while you're following a clear liquid diet.

- If you take insulin or another medication for diabetes, ask if you need to change the dose.
- Ask if you should drink sugar-free clear liquids.

Make sure to check your blood sugar level often while you're following a clear liquid diet. If you have any questions, talk with your healthcare provider.

Clear liquid diet		
	OK to have	Do not have
Soups	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Clear broth, bouillon, and consommé.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Anything with pieces of food or seasoning.
Sweets	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Gelatin, such as Jell-O®.• Flavored ices.• Hard candies, such as Life Savers®, lemon drops, and peppermints.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• All other sweets.

Drinks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clear fruit juices, such as lemonade, apple, cranberry, and grape juices. • Soda, such as ginger ale, 7UP®, Sprite®, and seltzer. • Sports drinks, such as Gatorade® and Powerade®. • Coffee without milk or creamer. • Tea without milk or creamer. • Water, including carbonated (fizzy) and flavored water. • Clear nutritional drinks, such as Boost® Breeze, Ensure Clear™, Pedialyte®, and Diabetishield®. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Juices with pulp. • Nectars. • Smoothies or shakes. • Milk, cream, and other dairy products. • Nut milks, plant milks, non-dairy creamers, and other dairy alternatives. • Drinks with alcohol.
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Take your MiraLAX bowel preparation

The morning of the day before your surgery, mix all 238 grams of MiraLAX with the 64 ounces of clear liquid until the MiraLAX powder dissolves. Once the powder is dissolved, you can put the mixture in the refrigerator if you want to.

At 5:00 p.m. on the day before your surgery, start drinking the MiraLAX mixture. It will cause frequent bowel movements (make you poop often), so make sure you're near a bathroom.

- Drink 1 (8-ounce) glass of the mixture every 15 minutes until it's gone.
- When you finish the MiraLAX mixture, drink 4 to 6 glasses of clear liquids. You can keep drinking clear liquids until midnight or until you go to bed, but you don't have to.
- Apply petroleum jelly (such as Vaseline®), zinc oxide ointment (such as Desitin®), or vitamin A&D cream (such as A+D® ointment) to the skin around your anus (the opening where poop leaves your body) after every bowel movement. This helps prevent irritation.

Take your antibiotics, if needed

If your healthcare provider told you to take antibiotics (metronidazole, neomycin, or both) before your surgery, take them according to the following schedule.

- **At 7:00 p.m. on the night before your surgery**, take 1 metronidazole tablet and 2 neomycin tablets.
- **At 11:00 p.m. on the night before your surgery**, take 1 metronidazole tablet and 2 neomycin tablets.

Take your medications as instructed

If your healthcare provider told you to take certain medications the morning of your surgery, take only those medications with a sip of water. Depending on what medications you take, this may be all, some, or none of your usual morning medications.

Instructions for eating and drinking before your surgery



- **Stop eating 8 hours before your arrival time.**
 - Your healthcare provider may tell you to stop eating earlier. If they do, follow their instructions.
- **8 hours before your arrival time, do not eat or drink anything except these clear liquids:**
 - Water.
 - Soda.
 - Clear juices, such as lemonade, apple, and cranberry juices. Do not drink orange juice or juices with pulp.
 - Black coffee or tea (without any type of milk or creamer).
 - Sports drinks, such as Gatorade®.

- Gelatin, such as Jell-O®.

You can keep having these until 2 hours before your arrival time.



Stop drinking 2 hours before your arrival time. This includes water.

If you have questions or concerns, contact your healthcare provider. A member of your care team will answer Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Outside those hours, you can leave a message or talk with another MSK provider. There is always a doctor or nurse on call. If you're not sure how to reach your healthcare provider, call 212-639-2000.

For more resources, visit www.mskcc.org/pe to search our virtual library.

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