Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center

PATIENT & CAREGIVER EDUCATION

Bowel Prep for Your Gynecologic Surgery

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

Buy supplies

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

- 1 (238-gram) bottle of polyethylene glycol, such as 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 these 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

Follow a clear liquid diet the day before your surgery. A clear liquid diet includes only liquids you can see through. You can find examples in the "Clear liquid diet" table.



While you're following a clear liquid diet:

- Do not eat any solid foods.
- Try to drink at least 1 (8-ounce) cup of clear liquid every hour you're awake.
- Drink different types of clear liquids. Do not just drink water, coffee, and tea.
- Do not drink any liquids you can't see through, such as milk or smoothies.
- Do not drink sugar-free liquids unless you have diabetes and a member of your care team tells you to.

How to follow a clear liquid diet if you have diabetes

Ask the healthcare provider who manages your diabetes:

- What to do while you're following a clear liquid diet.
- If you need to change your dose of insulin or other diabetes medication, if you take them.
- If you should drink sugar-free clear liquids.

Check your blood sugar level often while you're following a clear liquid diet. If you have questions, talk with your healthcare provider.

Clear liquid diet		
	OK to have	Do not have
Soups	• Clear broth, bouillon, and consommé.	• Anything with pieces of food or seasoning.
Sweets	• Gelatin, such as Jell-O®. • Flavored ices. • Hard candies, such as Life Savers®, lemon drops, and peppermints.	• All other sweets.

Drinks	• 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®. • Black coffee or plain tea without milk or creamer. • Water, including carbonated (fizzy) and flavored water. • Clear nutritional drinks, such as Boost® Breeze, Ensure Clear™, Pedialyte®, and Diabetishield®.	• 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.

Take your MiraLAX bowel prep

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 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) cup 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 after, 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 (butthole) 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 p.m. on the night before your surgery**, take 1 metronidazole tablet and 2

neomycin tablets.

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

The day of your surgery

Instructions for drinking

Important: If you take a GLP-1 medicine, do not follow these instructions. Follow the instructions in *Eating and Drinking Before Your Surgery or Procedure When Taking GLP-1 Medicines* (www.mskcc.org/pe/eat-drink-glp1) instead.

Between midnight (12 a.m.) and 2 hours before your arrival time, only drink the liquids on the list below. Do not eat or drink anything else. Stop drinking 2 hours before your arrival time.

- Water.
- Clear apple juice, clear grape juice, or clear cranberry juice.
- Gatorade or Powerade.
- Black coffee or plain tea. It's OK to add sugar. Do not add anything else.
  - Do not add any amount of any type of milk or creamer. This includes plant-based milks and creamers.
  - Do not add flavored syrup.

If you have diabetes, pay attention to the amount of sugar in your drinks. It's easier to control your blood sugar levels if you include sugar-free, low-sugar, or no added sugar versions of these drinks.

It's helpful to stay hydrated before surgeries and procedures, so drink if you're thirsty. Do not drink more than you need. You'll get intravenous (IV) fluids during your surgery or procedure.



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

Your healthcare provider may have given you different instructions for when to stop drinking. If so, follow their instructions.

Take your medicines as instructed

A member of your care team will tell you which medicines to take the morning of your surgery. Take only those medicines with a sip of water. Depending on what you usually take, this may be all, some, or none of your usual morning medicines.

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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