Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center

PATIENT & CAREGIVER EDUCATION

Two-Day Bowel Preparation for Your Urology Surgery or Procedure

This information explains how to do a 2-day bowel preparation to empty your colon before your urology surgery or procedure.

Buy Supplies

- ☐ 3 (10-ounce) bottles of magnesium citrate. Magnesium citrate is an over-the-counter laxative. You can buy it at your local pharmacy without a prescription.
- ☐ Clear liquids. For a list of clear liquids you can drink, read the section “Follow a Clear Liquid Diet.”

2 Days Before Your Surgery

Follow a clear liquid diet

You will need to start following a clear liquid diet 2 days before your surgery or procedure. A clear liquid diet includes only liquids you can see through. Examples are listed in the “Clear Liquid Diet” table.

While you’re on this diet:

- Don’t eat any solid foods.
- Try to drink at least 1 (8-ounce) glass of liquid every hour while you’re awake.
- Drink plenty of liquids other than water, coffee, and tea. You can drink liquids of any color.
- Don’t drink sugar-free liquids unless you have diabetes.

For people with diabetes

If you have diabetes, ask the doctor who manages your diabetes what you should do while you’re following a 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 liquids.

While you’re following a liquid diet, make sure to check your blood sugar level often. If you have any questions, talk with your healthcare provider.

Clear Liquid Diet		
	Drink	**Do Not Drink**

Soups	• Clear broth, bouillon, or consommé	• Any products with particles of dried food or seasoning
Sweets	• Gelatin, such as Jell-O® • Flavored ices • Hard candies, such as Life Savers®	• All others
Drinks	• Clear fruit juices, such as apple, cranberry, lemonade, or grape • Soda, such as 7-Up®, Sprite®, ginger ale, or seltzer • Gatorade® • Black coffee • Tea • Water	• Juices with pulp • Nectars • Milk or cream • Alcoholic drinks

Drink magnesium citrate

At **8:00 a.m.** 2 days before your surgery or procedure, drink 1 (10-ounce) bottle of magnesium citrate.

- You will probably start having bowel movements within 30 minutes. But, it can take as long as 3 hours before bowel movements start. Make sure to stay close to a toilet during your bowel preparation.
- Apply petroleum jelly (Vaseline®) or vitamin A&D ointment (A+D® Ointment) to the skin around your

anus after every bowel movement. This helps prevent irritation.

- Drink clear liquids all day until bedtime. You should drink clear liquids at your usual meal times and between meals.

1 Day Before Your Surgery

Follow a Clear Liquid Diet

Keep following a clear liquid diet the day before your surgery or procedure. If you have diabetes, remember to check your blood sugar level often. Follow any other instructions that the doctor who manages your diabetes gave you.

Drink Magnesium Citrate

At **8:00 a.m.** on the day before your surgery or procedure, drink 1 (10-ounce) bottle of magnesium citrate.

- Make sure to stay close to a toilet during your bowel preparation.
- Apply petroleum jelly or vitamin A&D ointment to the skin around your anus after every bowel movement.
- Keep drinking clear liquids all day until bedtime. Drink clear liquids at your usual meal times and between meals.

At **2:00 p.m.**, if your bowel movements aren’t clear, drink another (10-ounce) bottle of magnesium citrate.

Your healthcare provider will tell you if you can have anything to drink after midnight the night before your surgery or procedure.

If you have any questions, contact a member of your care team directly. If you're a patient at MSK and you need to reach a provider after 5 p.m., during the weekend, or on a holiday, call 212-639-2000.

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

Two-Day Bowel Preparation for Your Urology Surgery or Procedure - Last updated on November 28, 2018
All rights owned and reserved by Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center