How to take Bowel Preparation Medicine: Information for Patients

This leaflet gives instructions on how and when to take the bowel preparation medication. It is important that you read this information in its entirety at least one week before your appointment.

The medication is a laxative and needs to be taken to ensure that the bowel is empty before your procedure can be performed. A separate leaflet describing the procedure will be sent/given to you before your procedure date.

To get a clear view of the lining of the bowel, it must be empty and as clean as possible, therefore:

- You will need to follow a low fibre diet for two days before your test.
- You will need to take the laxatives included within your pack with this leaflet.
- The laxative will give you watery diarrhoea so you must drink lots of clear fluids and stay close to a toilet.

Please note that the time of your appointment will determine the time you take your bowel preparation. Please follow the instructions on the correct sheet.

You will need to follow the instructions carefully to ensure a good quality Colonoscopy.

Before you take the bowel preparation, please telephone us if:

- You are taking lithium
- You are suffering from kidney failure
- You are in poor health
- You are very frail
- You are Diabetic
- You are taking blood thinning tablets: Warfarin or Clopidogrel (Plavix)

Colostomy
If you have a Colostomy, the medicine will need to be taken in the same way. You are advised to put on a drainable appliance before taking the medication and continue with these until after the examination. If you do not have any drainable appliances (pouches) please contact your stoma care nurse: Tel 01895 279391

What to expect
You should expect frequent bowel motions and eventually diarrhoea by the early evening of the day before the colonoscopy. Some intestinal cramping is normal. If necessary please use a barrier cream such as zinc and castor oil on you bottom to prevent soreness. It is advisable to stay within easy reach of a toilet throughout. Some patients describe nausea but vomiting is unusual. Try and maintain your fluid intake throughout. If you do not drink enough fluids you may get dehydrated, feel dizzy, faint or experience a headache. Isotonic drinks such as Dioralyte or Lucozade sport can be useful if you are feeling dehydrated.

Allergic reactions can rarely occur and include an itchy rash, hives or swelling of the lips and tongue. If the latter occurs you should contact your emergency doctor immediately.
7 Days before your procedure:
- Stop taking any iron tablets
- Do not take any more than 75mg of Aspirin on any one day for the next 7 days
- Stop taking Clopidogrel: Please seek advice from your Cardiologist/GP before you stop

5 Days before your procedure:
- Stop taking Warfarin: Please seek advice from your GP/Cardiologist before you stop the Warfarin

4 Days before your procedure:
- Stop taking any constipating agents such as Lomotil, Imodium, codeine phosphate etc, but continue with all other medications.
- Do not take fibre supplements such as Fybogel.

2 Days before your procedure:
- Try to drink 2 litres of clear fluids (8-10 glasses) per day until the day of the procedure. As well as water you can take small amounts of milk in tea or coffee, Bovril/Oxo/Marmite drink, fruit squash and clear fruit juices, fizzy drinks e.g. Lucozade, hot honey and lemon.
- You may eat your normal meals for the whole day but avoid high fibre foods such as fruit, vegetables, wholemeal bread etc (see table below).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CHOOSE</th>
<th>AVOID</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Cereals:</strong> Cornflakes, Rice Krispies, Ricicles, Frosties, Sugar Puffs, Coco Pops</td>
<td>All wheat based cereals i.e. Wheat Bran, All Bran, Weetabix, Shredded Wheat, and porridge</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Bread:</strong> White bread</td>
<td>Wholemeal, high fibre white, soft grain or granary bread, oat bread</td>
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<td><strong>Pasta / Rice:</strong> White pasta, white rice</td>
<td>Wholemeal pastas, brown rice</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Flour:</strong> White flour</td>
<td>Wholemeal or granary flour, wheat-germ</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Savouries:</strong> chicken, turkey, fish, cheese and eggs</td>
<td>FRUIT AND VEGETABLES</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Preserves and Sweets:</strong> sugar, jelly jam, jelly marmalade, honey, syrup, lemon curd</td>
<td>All Red Meats</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Soups:</strong> clear or sieved soups</td>
<td>Those containing wholemeal flour, oatmeal, nuts, dried fruit etc, fruit cake, Ryvita, digestive or Hobnob biscuits</td>
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<td><strong>Miscellaneous:</strong> salt, pepper, vinegar, mustard, gelatine, salad cream, mayonnaise, boiled sweets, jelly babies, mints</td>
<td>Jam or marmalade with pips/peel/seeds, sweets and chocolates containing nuts and/or fruit, muesli bars</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Chunky vegetable, lentil or bean soups</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Nuts, Quorn, fresh ground peppercorns, hummus</td>
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</table>
### If your appointment is before 1:00 pm:

#### The day before your procedure:

Oral medication should not be taken within 1 hour of Citramag
If you are taking diuretics (‘water tablets’) or antihypertensives (‘blood pressure tablets’) these can be omitted on the day before and the day of the procedure.
If you are taking ‘ACE Inhibitors’ or ‘Non-Steroidal Anti-Inflammatories’ (NSAIDS) these should be omitted on the day before the procedure and for 72 hours afterwards. Please discuss with your GP if you are not sure what you are taking.
If you are taking the oral contraceptive pill, alternative contraceptive methods should be used for 14 days to avoid unwanted pregnancy.

Have a good breakfast and a light lunch at 12:00pm eating only foods from the permitted foods list on page 2
After this do not eat any solid food until after your examination, but drink plenty of clear fluids such as, tea, coffee, squash, carbonated drinks, water, clear soups, Bovril and Oxo. You may have small amounts of milk in your tea and coffee. Clear yellow jelly and ice cream are also permitted. **Drink** at least 1 ½ litres of clear liquids throughout the day.

At **4:00pm** in the comfort of your home take all 10 Senna tablets with a glass of water.

At **5:00pm** dissolve the contents of 1 sachet of Citramag in 200 mls (8 fluid ounces) of hot water in a wide mouthed large jug. Be careful the Citramag is effervescent and will spill over if a large jug is not used.
Allow the liquid to cool for at least 1/2 an hour before pouring it into a suitable glass and drinking it.

At **7:00pm** prepare and drink the second sachet of Citramag in the same way.

Stay close to an available toilet as you should expect to have frequent watery bowel movements (like diarrhoea) to start within 3 hours of taking the Citramag. It is important that you drink all of the Citramag to ensure the bowel is emptied completely.

**Remember:** You **MUST** drink plenty of clear fluids throughout the day and evening to avoid dehydration and headaches.

#### On the day of your procedure:

Take any prescribed medicines, other than those mentioned earlier, with a glass of water.
You may take a drink (water, black tea or squash) no later than 4 hours before your procedure.
Again you should remain close to a toilet, but by the time you leave for the hospital your bowel should be empty.
Please bring a dressing gown and slippers with you and something to read. Do not bring valuable items such as credit cards, jewellery etc.
If your appointment is after 1:00 pm:

**The day before your procedure:**

Oral medication should not be taken within 1 hour of Citramag
If you are taking diuretics (‘water tablets’) or antihypertensives (‘blood pressure tablets’) these can be omitted on the day before and the day of the procedure.
If you are taking ‘ACE Inhibitors’ or ‘Non-Steroidal Anti-Inflammatories’ (NSAIDS) these should be omitted on the day before the procedure and for 72 hours afterwards. Please discuss with your GP if you are not sure what you are taking.
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Allow the liquid to cool for at least 1/2 an hour before pouring it into a suitable glass and drinking it.
Stay close to an available toilet as you should expect to have frequent watery bowel movements (like diarrhoea) to start within 3 hours of taking the Citramag. It is important that you drink all of the Citramag to ensure the bowel is emptied completely. You may also experience stomach cramps.
**Remember:** You MUST drink plenty of clear fluids throughout the day and evening to avoid dehydration and headaches.

**On the day of your procedure:**

Take any prescribed medications, other than those mentioned earlier.
At **7:00 am**, prepare and drink the second sachet of Citramag. Oral medication should not be taken within 1 hour of Citramag.
You may have a drink (water, squash or black tea) no later than 4 hours before your appointment. Again you should remain close to a toilet, by the time you leave for the hospital the bowel should be empty.
Please bring a dressing gown and slippers with you and something to read. Do not bring valuable items such as credit cards, jewellery etc.

If you have any questions or problems before or after your Colonoscopy please do not hesitate to contact the Endoscopy unit on 01895 279214