How to prepare for your combined upper gastro-intestinal (GI) endoscopy and colonoscopy – Picolax preparation

Information for patients

This leaflet can be made available in other formats including large print, CD and Braille and in languages other than English, upon request.

This leaflet tells you how to prepare for your combined upper gastro-intestinal (GI) endoscopy and colonoscopy examination - Picolax preparation.

If you are taking Warfarin or any other blood thinning drugs, you must continue to take these. You should contact the Endoscopy Unit if you need any advice regarding your medication.

Do not stop taking any of the drugs listed on the next page, if you have been told you have a:

- condition called a Barrett's Oesophagus and have an endoscopy every 2 years as part of a routine screening programme
- stomach ulcer and are having an endoscopy to check if your ulcer has healed
- oesophagitis and are having an endoscopy to check that it has healed

you should continue taking your medication as normal.

If you do not have a Barrett's Oesophagus, a stomach ulcer or oesophagitis and you are taking any of the following drugs, you must stop taking them 10 days before your upper GI endoscopy.

If your appointment is within the next 10 days, stop taking them now.

Ranitidine (Zantac)
Cimetidine (Tagamet)
Lansoprazole (Zoton)
Pantoprazole (Protium)
Nizatidine (Axid)
Famotidine (Pepcid)
Omeprazole (Losec)
Nexium (Esomeprazole)
Pariet (Rabeprazole).

You must follow the special low residue diet set out in this leaflet and take the Senokot laxatives and both sachets of Picolax.
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Please note: The instructions given in this leaflet for taking the Picolax are slightly different from those given in the Picolax information sheet. You must follow the instructions given in this leaflet.

If these instructions are not followed your examination may have to be cancelled or repeated.

Before taking Picolax

Please read the back of the Picolax packet and contact nursing staff in the Endoscopy Unit for further advice if you answer yes to any of the following questions:

- are you allergic to any of the ingredients listed on the packet?
- are you taking Clopidogrel?
- are you taking Rivaroxaban?
- are you taking Apixaban?
- are you taking Dabigatran?
- are you taking any other medication to thin your blood?
- are you pregnant or breast feeding?
- are you a diabetic on insulin or tablets?
- do you suffer from any kidney disease?

If you are taking aspirin, you can continue to take this.

7 days before your appointment

Stop taking any iron tablets. Iron makes everything inside your bowel black, making it difficult for your endoscopist (a doctor or nurse trained to do endoscopies) to see anything.

4 days before your appointment

Stop taking any drugs that may cause you to become constipated, for example, Lomotil, Loperamide or codeine phosphate, but continue to take all other usual medications.

3 days before your appointment

You must drink at least 250mls - 300mls of fluid (an average size teacup full) of drink from the diet list every hour (throughout the day time) over the 3 day preparation period. If you do this your bowel will be empty, clean and ready for your endoscopy and colonoscopy examination.
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2 days before your appointment

If you are taking Fybogel or any other fibre products stop taking them now. The fibre content of these products will work against the special diet you are about to take. Start your diet at breakfast.

Eat freely from the foods in the diet list on the next page unless you are allergic to, or have been advised to avoid, certain foods

**Do not eat any foods or have any drinks that are not on this diet list.**

**Diet list**

No milk in any form

**Drinks:** water is preferred, however, you can also drink black tea or coffee, fizzy drinks, fruit squash (not real fruit juice), Marmite, Oxo, Bovril, soda water

**Meat:** lean meat, for example, chicken, turkey, beef, ham and rabbit

**Fish:** white fish only (do not fry)

**Eggs:** boiled, poached or scrambled only, no milk to be used

**Potatoes:** you must only have boiled or mashed, no milk to be used. You **must not** eat any other vegetables.

**Rice and Pasta:** white only boiled. No wholemeal varieties.

**Bread:** white bread and white bread rolls only

**Fats:** a daily allowance of 25g (1oz) butter or margarine

**Other:** plain jelly, rich tea biscuits, honey, golden syrup, white sugar, artificial sweeteners, boiled sweets and salt.

1 day before your appointment

Continue to follow the instructions given earlier and only eat and drink from the diet list.

**2.00pm:** Take 4 Senokot tablets.
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No more food to be eaten after this time until after your examination.
5.00pm: Dissolve the 1st sachet of Picolax in 500mls (1 pint) of water. This can be prepared in advance, flavoured with fruit squash (not fruit juice) and stored in the fridge. Drink all of this mixture.

Make sure you are within easy reach of the toilet once you have taken the Picolax. Be prepared to have your bowels opened several times during the late afternoon and early evening. It will be like having diarrhoea (very loose watery bowel motions (poo)).

Common effects of Picolax are:

- nausea (feeling sick)
- vomiting (being sick)
- bloating
- abdominal pain
- anal irritation (itchy opening to your back passage)
- disturbed sleep.

It is normal to suffer from any of the symptoms above. However, if any of these symptoms become severe you should telephone the unit where you are to have your examination or you should contact the GP Out of Hours Service (see contact numbers).

You should have at least 250mls - 300mls of drink from the diet list every hour (throughout the day) to prevent yourself from becoming dehydrated.

Diarrhoea and severe vomiting may cause your body to become dehydrated.

Symptoms of dehydration are:

- dizziness
- headache
- confusion.

If you develop any of these symptoms you must contact your GP or the Accident and Emergency Department (see contact numbers).

Prescribed tablets or medicine (if due) must not be taken within 1 hour of taking Picolax. If taken before this your medication may be flushed out of your body by the effect of the Picolax.
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If you develop a rash, your body becomes itchy or you have any redness or swelling to any part of the body you must go to the Accident and Emergency Department (see contact numbers) as you may be allergic to the Picolax.

On the day of your appointment

6.00am - 7.00am: Dissolve the 2nd sachet of Picolax in 500mls (1 pint) of water. Drink all of this mixture even if you have already had your bowels opened several times.

Prescribed tablets or medicine (if due) must not be taken within 1 hour of taking Picolax. If taken before this your medication may be flushed out of your body by the effect of the Picolax.

If your appointment is in the morning you must not have anything to drink after 7.00am on the morning of your procedure.

If your appointment is in the afternoon, you should continue to have at least 250mls - 300mls of drink from the diet list every hour to prevent yourself from becoming dehydrated. You should not have any fluids after 11.00am.

You must not have anything to eat until after your upper GI endoscopy and colonoscopy.

Before your examination you must:

- not smoke
- tie back long hair for comfort
- remove any nail varnish
- remove any make-up
- remove all jewellery except your wedding ring
- wear loose-fitting clothing.

Please do not bring any valuables with you.

If you are not sure about how to prepare for your combined upper GI endoscopy and colonoscopy, please contact your Endoscopy Unit for advice (See contact numbers)
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Contact numbers

If you need further advice, or have any problems, please contact the unit where you are to have your examination.

University Hospital of North Tees

Endoscopy Unit
telephone: 01642 624387
Monday, Wednesday and Friday, 8.00am - 7.00pm
Tuesday and Thursday, 8.00am – 9.30pm
Saturday, 8.00am – 2.00pm

Accident and Emergency Department
telephone: 01642 382899
24 hours a day, 7 days a week

University Hospital of Hartlepool

Rutherford Morison Unit
telephone: 01429 522356
Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday, 8.00am - 6.30pm
Wednesday, 8.00am – 9.30pm

If you have any worries or concerns you should contact your GP during normal surgery hours. Outside surgery hours you should contact your GP’s surgery for the Out of Hours Service number.

Further information is available from:

NHS Choices
telephone: 111 (when it is less urgent than 999)
Calls to this number are free from landlines and mobile phones.
or via the website at www.nhs.uk
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This leaflet has been produced in partnership with patients and carers. All patient leaflets are regularly reviewed, and any suggestions you have as to how it may be improved are extremely valuable. Please write to the Quality Assurance Team, University Hospital of North Tees or email: patientinformation@nth.nhs.uk

Comments, Concerns, Compliments or Complaints

We are continually trying to improve the services we provide.

We want to know what we’re doing well or if there’s anything which we can improve, that’s why the Patient Experience Team is here to help.

Our Patient Experience Team is here to try to resolve your concerns as quickly as possible. If you would like to contact or request a copy of our PET leaflet, please contact:

    telephone: 01642 624719
    Monday – Friday, 9.00 am – 4.00 pm
    Messages can be left on the answering machine and will be picked up throughout the day.

    freephone: 0800 092 0084
    Mobile: (can use text): 0779 506 1883
    Email: patientexperience@nth.nhs.uk

Out of hours if you wish to speak to a senior member of Trust staff, please contact the hospital switchboard who will bleep the appropriate person.

    telephone: 01642 617617
    24 hours a day, 7 days a week

The Patient Experience Team is available to discuss your concerns in person Monday – Friday, 1.30 pm – 4.30 pm. The office is based on the ground floor at the University Hospital of North Tees.

Data Protection and use of patient information

The Trust has developed a Data Protection Policy in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1988 and the Freedom of Information Act 2000. All of our staff respect this policy and confidentiality is adhered to at all times. If you require further information please contact the Information Governance Team.

    telephone: 01642 833551 or email: information.governance@nth.nhs.uk