

Virtual (CT) Colonography

VIRTUAL COLONOSCOPY is a well established method of assessing the large bowel for polyps or colon cancer. This Diagnostic Imaging test has been utilized for several years and has gained acceptance in the literature as a very good screening test for detecting colon cancer and polyps.

The examination involves the instillation of carbon dioxide into the colon using a small rectal tube. You will then have a CT scan, first with you lying on your back and then lying on your stomach.

In general, the acquisition of the images takes about 20 – 30 minutes. But please plan on being in the Diagnostic Imaging Department for up to 1.5 hours.

During the examination you may experience some bloating and mild cramping. This will resolve very quickly following the test.

You will not be given a sedative for the procedure. You will have an intravenous access placed and will be given an injection to decrease your bowel movement during the study. This allows the bowel to distend fully so that any suspicious polyps or masses can be detected.

The radiologist then uses a computer program to produce 3-dimensional views to look inside the large bowel for suspicious polyps and cancers.

After the radiologist reviews all the images, a report will be sent to your Referring Doctor.

IMPORTANT INSTRUCTIONS:

- For this test, you will need to take a laxative to clean the bowel and 2 types of oral contrast (dye) to label the stool in the colon (in order to distinguish stool from polyps on the CT images).
- If the bowel is not clean, polyps and cancers can be missed. Therefore, it is **very important** to follow the laxative and diet instructions **fully** and **carefully**.
- Your last bowel movement should be clear liquid. If the bowel is not clean, the test cannot be done.

WARNINGS:

- If you any medical problems such as **congestive heart disease** or **severely reduced kidney function**, please contact your Referring Physician because the laxative recommended for this test may not be appropriate for you. He/she may prescribe a different laxative more suitable for your condition.
- If you are an **insulin-dependent diabetic**, consult your Family Physician **BEFORE** you start your bowel preparation. Your doses of the insulin may need to be adjusted by your doctor during the 2 days of bowel preparation and for the morning of the CT exam.

SUPPLIES:

- **ORAL CONTRAST KIT:** (This kit is available for pick up at the St. Joseph's Healthcare Diagnostic Imaging Department. The kit contains 2 types of oral contrast.)

1. **GASTROGRAFIN:** 30mL (1 bottle). You will use 30mL.



2. **READI-CAT:** 450mL each (2 bottles). Total of 900mL, but you will only use 750mL.



- **PICO-SALAX:** (You will need to buy 2 sachets this laxative (any flavour))



CLEAR LIQUID DIET:

CLEAR LIQUID DIET LIST: You may have any items on this List as your 'Clear Liquid Diet'.	
Beverages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Water. •Non-caffeinated soft drinks (orange, ginger ale, decaffeinated cola, Sprite), Gatorade, Kool-Aid, etc. • Strained fruit juices <i>without</i> pulp (apple, orange, lemonade, etc). •Decaffeinated tea or decaffeinated coffee (<u>NO</u> milk and <u>NO</u> non-dairy creamer).
Soups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Clear low sodium chicken or beef bouillon/broth (<u>NO</u> pieces of noodles, meat or vegetables).
Desserts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Hard candies (NO cream and solid bits). •Clear Jell-O (lemon, lime or orange (<u>NO</u> fruit pieces or toppings). •Popsicles (<u>NO</u> sherbets or fruit bars).

*AVOID alcoholic drinks and caffeinated foods/drinks (including chocolate, coffee, tea and cola).

BOWEL PREP TIMELINE:



2 DAYS BEFORE CT EXAM:




- You should only be eating a 'Low Residue' Diet for Breakfast, and a 'Clear Liquid Diet' for Lunch and Dinner.
- You may take your usual medications (See warnings above, if you have diabetes mellitus.)

Breakfast	<p>Low Residue Breakfast may include any of the following items:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One boiled/poached egg or a small portion of skinless chicken/turkey or fish. • White toast – <u>NO</u> butter. • One 8 oz. Can Ensure (<u>Do not take Ensure Plus</u>). <p>You can also have the items on the CLEAR LIQUID DIET List.</p>
Lunch	CLEAR LIQUID DIET
Dinner	CLEAR LIQUID DIET

1 DAY BEFORE CT EXAM:

- You should be on a strict CLEAR LIQUID DIET.
- The laxative often starts to work within 30 minutes, but it may take up to 3 hours. Remain close to a toilet, as multiple bowel movements will occur.
- You may apply Vaseline over the anal area after each bowel movement to prevent irritation.
- You MUST drink at least one glass of clear fluid every hour until bedtime. In order for the laxative to work, you must be well hydrated. You should never feel thirsty.

8:30am: Breakfast	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• CLEAR LIQUID DIET• READI-CAT: Shake well and pour out 250mL into a glass and drink it.  <ul style="list-style-type: none">• PICO-SALAX: Mix 1 sachet with 150mL of cold water and drink it.  <ul style="list-style-type: none">• You must drink at least one glass of clear fluid every hour until bedtime.
12:00pm: Lunch	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• CLEAR LIQUID DIET• READI-CAT: Shake well and pour out 250mL into a glass and drink it.  <ul style="list-style-type: none">• You must drink at least one glass of clear fluid every hour until bedtime.

<p>2:30pm: Afternoon</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PICO-SALAX: Mix 1 sachet with 150mL of cold water and drink it.  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You must drink at least one glass of clear fluid every hour until bedtime.
<p>6:00pm: Dinner</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CLEAR LIQUID DIET • READI-CAT: Shake well and pour out 250mL into a glass and drink it. • Discard the remainder of the READI-CAT.  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You must drink at least one glass of clear fluid every hour until bedtime.
<p>8:30pm: Evening</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GASTROGRAFIN: <p>-Mix the whole 30mL bottle of Gastrografin with a glass of water (or soda/juice to mask the taste), and drink it.</p>  <p>-Drink another ½ to 1 glass of water after.</p>

DAY OF CT EXAM:

- Clear liquid fluid only.
- Your last bowel movement should be clear liquid. If it is not, please let the CT technologist know.
- The morning of the CT exam, you can take your essential medications (But please wait until after the CT exam to take your vitamins and supplements).

- After the exam, you may return to your usual diet, as tolerated.