University Hospitals Dorset
NHS Foundation Trust

Preparation for colonoscopy with sodium picosulfate powder: Morning appointment

Endoscopy Department Patient information

You have been given this information sheet and three sachets of sodium picosulfate powder. Please follow these steps carefully to make sure your bowel is empty. This helps the doctor look inside clearly during your test.

7 days before your colonoscopy:

- If you take **iron tablets** (like ferrous sulphate or ferrous fumarate) or **fibre drinks** (like Fybogel or Ispaghula Husk), **stop taking them now**.
- You can start taking them again after your test.

5 days before your colonoscopy:

- If you take medicine to stop diarrhoea (like **loperamide**), **stop taking it now**.
- Keep taking your other usual medicines, including any laxatives.
- From now on, **only eat foods low in fibre** until after your colonoscopy

Choose (low fibre)	Avoid (high fibre)
Cereals such as cornflakes, Rice Krispies, Ricicles, Frosties, Sugar Puffs, Coco Pops	All Bran, Wheat Bran, Weetabix, Shredded Wheat, Branflakes, Oat Bran, Muesli, Ready Brek, Porridge, Granola
White bread / rolls, white wraps, white pitta, white naan or chapatti, crumpets	Wholemeal, high fibre white ('Best of Both'), softgrain, granary or oatmeal bread products
White pasta or noodles, white rice, cous cous	Wholemeal pasta or noodles, brown rice
White flour, white breadcrumbs or batter	Wholemeal or granary flour, wheatgerm
Chicken, turkey, fish, cheese, eggs (including plain omelettes)	All red meats, including foods containing red meat such as burgers, sausages, ham
Clear or sieved soups (consommé or Bovril)	Chunky vegetable, lentil or bean soups
Potato flesh, boiled or mashed potato, crisps	Potato skins, jacket potatoes
Fruit juice with no 'bits' or pulp, cordial, squash herbal or fruit tea (i.e. chamomile)	All fruits and vegetables, smoothies, salads
Milk, cream, custard, ice cream, jelly, lollies, milk puddings (e.g. crème caramel, semolina, rice pudding, tapioca, sago, blancmange) smooth mousse or yoghurt, crème fraiche	Yoghurts containing pieces of fruit / grains

Sponge cake, Madeira cake, rich tea biscuits, wafers, shortbread, waffles and pancakes made with white flour	Any cakes or biscuits made with wholemeal flour, nuts, fruit or grains (fruit cake, Ryvita, digestives or HobNobs)
Honey, lemon curd, golden or maple syrup, jams or marmalades containing no 'bits', Marmite, smooth peanut butter	Jam or marmalade with pips, skins or seeds, crunchy peanut butter, snacks containing nuts or fruit (muesli bars)
Salt, sugar, fine ground pepper, vinegar, mustard, gelatine, ground or dried herbs, salad cream, mayonnaise, ketchup, oil, butter	Nuts, Quorn, fresh herbs, fresh ground peppercorns, whole pickles, chutney, hummus

The day before your colonoscopy:

- Eat a low-fibre breakfast before 7am.
- After breakfast, only drink clear fluids until after your colonoscopy.
- Do not eat or drink anything that is not clear during this time.

Clear fluids you can have:

- Water
- Black tea or black coffee (no milk)
- Herbal or fruit tea (no bits in it)
- Clear, strained soups like consommé or sieved minestrone
- Drinks like Oxo, Bovril, or Marmite
- Clear jelly (not red or purple)
- Clear fruit squash or cordial (not red or purple)
- Clear fruit juice like apple or white grape juice
- Boiled sweets (not red or purple)
- Clear fizzy drinks (not red or purple) - but these might make you feel bloated

At 7am take the first sachet of sodium picosulfate powder:

- Mix one sachet in about 150ml (a cup) of cold water and stir.
- It might get warm. Wait for it to cool before drinking.
- Drink slowly and don't rush.
- If you feel sick, slow down and take small sips until it's finished.
- You can add a little clear squash or cordial to make it taste better.
- Some people find it easier to drink through a straw.

What to expect:

- After 2 to 3 hours you will start needing to go to the toilet a lot.
- You might have diarrhoea. Make sure you can get to a bathroom easily.

Drink lots of clear fluids after taking the powder:

- Try to drink 1 to 2 glasses every hour (about 200 to 400 ml) to avoid dehydration.

Medication advice:

- There is another sheet with advice about your medicines.
- Don't take any medicines within 1 hour of taking the sodium picosulfate powder unless your doctor says it's okay.

At 1pm take the second sachet of sodium picosulfate powder:

- Keep drinking plenty of clear fluids.

At 7pm take the third sachet of piccolax:

- Your poo will get more watery and clearer each time you go to the toilet.
- By the morning it should be watery and mostly clear.

The day of your colonoscopy

- Keep drinking clear fluids until 2 hours before your appointment.
- Then don't eat or drink anything until after your colonoscopy.
- It's okay to take tablets like paracetamol (for headaches) with a little water.

If you're having both a gastroscopy and colonoscopy:

- Stop eating or drinking 4 hours before your appointment.
- If you need to take medicine, you can take it with small sips of water.

If you need help, contact:

- Royal Bournemouth Hospital Endoscopy Dept: **0300 019 4668** (Monday to Friday, 8am - 6pm)
- Poole Hospital Endoscopy Dept: **0300 019 2772** (Monday to Friday, 8am - 6pm).

Remember to bring a list of your medicines and allergies when you come in

- Your GP receptionist can print this list for you if needed.

To read this leaflet in a different language,
please visit our website: **www.uhd.nhs.uk/visit/patient-information-leaflets**
and use the language and accessibility function available along the top of the site.

To ask for this leaflet in larger print, please contact the patient experience team on **0300 019 8499**
or email **uhd.patientexperienceteam@nhs.net**.

The Royal Bournemouth Hospital, Castle Lane East, Bournemouth, Dorset, BH7 7DW
Poole Hospital, Longfleet Road, Poole, Dorset, BH15 2JB

Author: **Katrina Jones** and **Andreea Brooks** Date: **October 2026** Version: **Seven** Review date: **October 2029** Ref: **021/22**

w: www.uhd.nhs.uk : @UHDTrust : @uhd_nhs

Some of our hospital services are moving.
Visit **www.uhd.nhs.uk/future** to find out more.