

About a colonoscopy

A colonoscopy is an examination of the lining of the colon using a colonoscope which is a long, thin, flexible tube with a tiny video camera and light at the end. If growths (polyps) or other abnormalities are found, the physician may remove the abnormal tissue for closer examination, called a biopsy. Your colon will need to be cleansed thoroughly to complete the procedure.

You may need to complete a consult with Cardiology or the performing location prior to scheduling.

You will be given an intravenous (IV) line through which sedative medications will be given.



Colonoscopy Types

Screening Colonoscopy: Usually for patients over 45 years old who have no symptoms nor have had a colonoscopy in the past ten years (other conditions may apply) depending on your insurance.

Diagnostic Colonoscopy: Patients having symptoms such as blood in stool or diarrhea.

Follow up or Surveillance Colonoscopy:

Patients with no symptoms but who have had a polyp removed in the past or other conditions that warrant a repeat colonoscopy.

Learn more about colonoscopies here:

screen4coloncancer.org | asge.org/patients

Northern Light locations that perform colonoscopies:

Let your provider know if one of these Northern Light Health locations might be more convenient for you:

Northern Light Gastroenterology, **Bangor**

Northern Light Surgery, **Presque Isle**

Northern Light Surgery, **Waterville**

Northern Light Surgery, **Ellsworth**

Northern Light Surgery, **Dover-Foxcroft**

Northern Light Gastroenterology, **Portland**

Northern Light Surgery, **Pittsfield**

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French: ATTENTION: Si vous parlez français, des services d'aide linguistique vous sont proposés gratuitement.
Appelez le 1-888-986-6341 (ATS: 711)

Spanish: ATENCIÓN: Si habla español, tiene a su disposición servicios gratuitos de asistencia lingüística.
Llame al 1-888-986-6341 (TTY: 711)



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Preparing for your Screening Colonoscopy

Information and Resources

We want to make you as comfortable as possible during your colonoscopy. We know it can be difficult, and we want to make sure you are prepared to have the best results. Here is a helpful guide to get ready for your procedure.

Early Detection is Key

Colorectal cancer is the 2nd leading cause of cancer-related deaths in the United States. Screening can often find colorectal cancer early, and if found early, it may be easier to treat.

A colonoscopy can actually prevent cancer by removing polyps before they turn into cancer.

Instructions and preparation

Five Days Before Your Colonoscopy

- ☐ **Purchase the following from your pharmacy:***
 - A 238 gram bottle of Miralax
 - Four Dulcolax tablets (5 mg)
 - A 64 oz. bottle of Gatorade (not red, blue, or purple)
 - Assorted clear liquids

* Prep with instructions may be prescribed by your provider.
- ☐ **Stop taking the following:**
 - Ibuprofen, Advil, or any other NSAID (non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drug).
 - Fish Oil
 - Pepto Bismol
 - Iron supplements or multivitamins with iron
 - Fiber supplements
 - Foods with seeds or nuts including strawberries, tomatoes, bananas, corn, and beans

You may remain on: 81 mg of aspirin.

Diabetic Patients: please contact your primary care provider for medication instructions.

This is an example of what the prep for your colonoscopy may look like.

Once your procedure is scheduled, a nurse will call you to go over your specific prep instructions, review your medications and answer any questions you may have.

Plan ahead! Who will be your support person?

Please arrange for someone to come in with you, receive discharge instructions, and sign you out. They will also need to drive you home. We highly recommend someone stay with you for 24 hours after your procedure.

One Day Before Your Colonoscopy

These instructions may be different depending on the time of your procedure.

- ☐ **Do not eat or drink solid food. Drink clear liquids only (nothing red, blue, or purple).**

Clear liquids include:

- Water
- Popsicles
- Clear fruit juices such as apple or white grape
- Coffee or tea without cream or dairy
- Gatorade (not red, blue, or purple)
- Soft drinks, lemonade, ice tea, and Crystal Light
- Jello (not red, blue, or purple)
- Bouillon

- ☐ **At 1 pm**
 - Take two Dulcolax tablets

- ☐ **At 5 pm**
 - Mix whole bottle of Miralax with 64 oz. of Gatorade (not red, blue, or purple)
 - Divide solution, placing half in refrigerator for the next day
 - With the other half, drink an 8 oz glass every 10-20 minutes until gone. (If you experience nausea, take a 45 minute break, then resume drinking the prep)

- ☐ **At 9 pm**
 - Take two Dulcolax tablets

The Day of Your Colonoscopy

These instructions may be different depending on the time of your procedure.

- ☐ **Do not eat solid foods.**
 - Morning medications can be taken with a tiny amount of water, except diabetic patients who will need to follow their primary care provider instructions.
- ☐ **Five hours before**
 - Finish drinking the Miralax solution from the day before
 - Drink an 8 oz. glass every 10-20 minutes until gone. (If you experience nausea, take a 45 minute break, then resume drinking the prep)
- ☐ **Two hours before**
 - Stop all liquids two hours before your scheduled colonoscopy time



If you have questions about these instructions, please call your scheduler.

Rescheduling your colonoscopy:

If you need to reschedule your colonoscopy, contact the office as soon as possible so that there is time to contact another patient to fill that spot.

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