



Division of General Surgery:

[Information on Colorectal Conditions](#)

Preparing for Your Colorectal Surgery

INSTRUCTIONS BEFORE RECTAL SURGERY

It is very important to get your rectum well cleaned out before your surgery, in order to minimize the risk of infection.

If instructed by your surgeon, please go to your pharmacy or drug store and purchase two boxes of "Fleet Enema." These come in a green and white box, 4.5 fluid ounces, one enema to each small box. No prescription is necessary.

Two hours or so before your surgery appointment (or if you have a long drive, two hours before your drive), please (follow the directions for administration on the box). A Fleet enema is a small amount of liquid that you insert into your rectum, hold for about five minutes, and then go to the bathroom **take the two Fleet enemas**. Take the two enemas consecutively (one about fifteen minutes after the other). For example, if your surgery appointment is at 9:00 a.m., please take the first enema at about 7:00 a.m., move your bowels as best you can, and then take the second enema at about 7:15 a.m. (and move your bowels again, if there is anything left).

In preparation for your surgery, please have **nothing to eat or drink after midnight the night before your operation**. Nevertheless, except for the medicines mentioned below, please take any prescription medicines as you normally would, **INCLUDING ON THE DAY OF THE PROCEDURE** (take with just a little sip of water). If you are on anticoagulant medication (blood thinners) such as warfarin (Coumadin), dipyridamole (Persantine), or ticlopidine (Ticlid), these usually must be stopped five days or so before your procedure, if it is acceptable with your medical physician. It is fine to continue aspirin before this type of surgery. If you are on insulin, it is usually best to take half of your usual dose of insulin on the morning of your surgery (but again, check with your regular medical physician if you have questions about insulin).

If you are having outpatient surgery, it is very important that you **have someone with you to escort you home after the procedure**. Hospital rules dictate that you cannot leave the Same Day Surgery Unit without one, and you are not permitted to drive, take a taxi, or take the subway by yourself afterwards. If you wish, you may come by yourself, as long as another person can be sure to pick you up later at your time of discharge.

On the day of your surgery, please report to the Same Day Surgery Unit (SDSU) on the third floor of the Wang Ambulatory Care Center (Wang 309).

NOTE: Clear liquids include: water, ice tea, coffee, decaffeinated coffee, clear broth, plain jello desserts such as jello (but no RED jello please), non-milk sherbet (sorbet), apple juice, grape juice, and cranberry juice. Do not drink milk products. Do not drink alcoholic beverages 24 hours before the procedure.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR BOWEL SURGERY

Cleaning out the bowel and taking antibiotics before surgery is very important. The cleaner you can make your bowel, the less risk there will be of infection. Please follow the instructions below.

Starting the day before your scheduled surgery, **eat a regular breakfast, but have only clear liquids (see below) after that, for lunch and dinner.** If instructed by your surgeon, begin taking the "NuLYTELY" preparation at about 2:00 that day (you may start earlier in the afternoon if you wish; the process takes 4-6 hours). About a half an hour before beginning to drink the "NuLYTELY" solution, **take the one tablet of metoclopramide**, which you will be given. This will help your stomach empty more easily and reduce any bloating sensation. You should then **drink one 8-ounce glass of the "NuLYTELY" solution every 10-15 minutes**, and continue drinking until you have totally used up the four liters of solution. Because this treatment will cause passage of frequent watery stools, you will, of course, need to have ready access to a bathroom. The diarrhea may continue for some time after you finish taking the fluid. If you become nauseated or bloated, take a half-hour to an hour break, and then resume drinking at a slower rate. Refrigerating the solution will make it more palatable, as will adding lemon or lime concentrate. Also, adding "Lemon Crystal Light" sugar free lemon drink mix often works well (although the bottle states that you should not add anything to the "NuLYTELY," it is okay to add Lemon Crystal Light; the important thing is to not add anything containing sugar to the "NuLYTELY"). Drinking the solution through a straw helps, too. No other laxatives or enemas should be necessary. Stay on a diet of only clear liquids after finishing the "NuLYTELY." Do not drink alcoholic beverages 24 hours before the procedure.

Take the two kinds of antibiotic pills (usually erythromycin base and neomycin) at 8:00 pm, 9:00 pm, and 11:00 pm the night before your surgery. If your operation is scheduled for noon or later, take the pills at 8:00 pm and 9:00 pm the night before your surgery, and again at 8:00 am the day of your operation. (The dose is one gram or 1000 mg of each, each time; some pharmacies may give you two 500 mg tablets to take each time, or you may get a single one-gram tablet for each dose).

Do not eat or drink anything after midnight the night before you operation. You should, however, take any prescription medicines as you normally would, including on the day of the procedure (take with just a little sip of water). The exception is anticoagulant medication (blood thinners) such as warfarin (Coumadin), dipyridamole (Persantine), or ticlopidine (Ticlid). These usually must be stopped five days or so before your procedure, if it is acceptable with your medical physician. Aspirin is fine before this type of surgery. If you are on insulin, it is usually best to take half of your usual dose of insulin on the morning of your colonoscopy (but again, check with your regular medical physician if you have questions about insulin).

If you are having outpatient surgery, it is very important that you **have someone with you to escort you home after the procedure.** Hospital rules dictate that you cannot leave the Same Day Surgery Unit without one, and you are not permitted to drive, take a taxi, or take the subway by yourself afterwards. If you wish, you may come by yourself, as long as another person can be sure to pick you up later at your time of discharge.

On the day of your surgery, please report to the Same Day Surgery Unit (SDSU) on the third floor of the Wang Ambulatory Care Center (Wang 309).

NOTE: Clear liquids include: water, ice tea, coffee, decaffeinated coffee, clear broth, plain jello desserts such as jello (but no RED jello please), non-milk sherbet (sorbet), apple juice, grape juice, and cranberry juice. Do not drink milk products. Do not drink alcoholic beverages 24 hours before the procedure.