

Tips for helping people with diabetes successfully navigate the preparation and recovery steps for a colonoscopy

What is a colonoscopy?

A colonoscopy is an examination of the lining of the colon with a lighted, flexible tube about the thickness of your finger. The doctor will insert the tube through your rectum and up through your colon checking for abnormalities. Often during the colonoscopy, your doctor may perform other minor procedures such as a polyp removal. In addition, if necessary, a small piece of tissue (a biopsy) can be taken for examination in the lab. Colonoscopies are one of the best preventive health measures for colon cancer.

How do I prepare?

Preparation for a colonoscopy requires a special liquid diet the day before the exam and no solid foods are permitted. This can cause problems for people with diabetes. You will take a strong laxative in order to clean out the colon. If you are not careful, the laxative effect can lead to dehydration. Be sure to drink plenty of fluids. You will need to test your blood glucose more frequently the day before the test and possibly for a few days after the procedure. Be sure to schedule your colonoscopy early in the day, since the test requires fasting. If you use insulin, you may need to reduce your insulin intake during the preparation phase and the day of the test (see reverse side for specific details).

What should I tell my doctor?

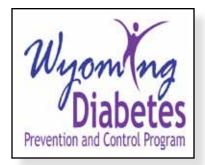
Tell the doctor who is going to perform your colonoscopy that you have diabetes. He/she will need to know all the medications you are taking. Be sure to tell the doctor if you are on warfarin (Coumadin), blood-thinner, or any anti-clotting medications. You may need special instructions.



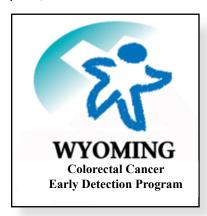
Specific instructions for patients with diabetes

- 1. All efforts should be made to schedule your procedure in the early morning. If this is not possible, consult with your physician for specific instructions.
- 2. The clear liquid diet you are instructed to eat contains sugar. This is ok. The sugar replaces the carbohydrates you would normally eat with meals.
- Continue to test your blood sugar before your procedure. Perform a test at home the morning of your colonoscopy and report the result to the nurse upon your arrival at the hospital.
- 4. If you are taking metformin (Glucophage, Avandamet, Metaglip, Glucovance or generic metformin), your doctor may have you discontinue your metformin medicine the day before your procedure and resume taking it the day after your procedure.
- 5. Other medications for diabetes (including Glyburide, Glipizide, Actos, Avandia, Prandin, Starlix, Glyset, Precose) are usually taken the day and night before your procedure, but not usually taken the morning of the colonoscopy. Resume taking these medications when you arrive home after the procedure.
- 6. Check your blood sugars every one to two hours up to and right after your procedure has ended. Bring your blood glucose meter, test strips, and a low blood glucose treatment with you on the day of the procedure.
- 7. If you are taking insulin, check with your diabetes health care provider for instructions. If you are taking the long acting insulin Lantus or Levemir, do not stop it. If you are taking the long acting insulin NPH, you will probably take your normal dose the evening before, but may be asked to only take 2/3 of your normal dose the morning of your colonoscopy.
- 8. If you are taking rapid acting insulin (Regular, Humalog, Apidra, or Novolog), your doctor may instruct you to not take any on the morning of your procedure (unless your blood sugar is above 200 mg/dL, in which case, you may be instructed to take ½ of your usual dose).
- 9. If your blood sugar is high before, during or after the procedure, you may need to receive extra dose(s) of insulin.

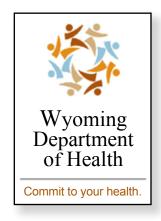
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