

# DIABETES AND COLONOSCOPIES

## Tips to help you get ready for your colonoscopy

### What is a colonoscopy?

A colonoscopy is a test doctors use to prevent colon and rectal cancer. The colon is the large intestine or large bowel. The rectum is the last part of the colon.

Your doctor will insert a flexible tube through your rectum and slowly move it into your colon. This lets the doctor look for anything out of the ordinary on the lining of your colon. If something out of the ordinary is found, your doctor will remove it before it can turn into cancer.

A colonoscopy usually takes about 30 minutes.

A colonoscopy is one of the best ways to prevent colon and rectal cancer. It can also find cancer early, when it is easiest to treat.

### How do I prepare?

To get ready for your colonoscopy, you will need to **talk with your doctor about a liquid diet**. A liquid diet means you will be able to have items such as water, plain tea or coffee, clear fruit juice, and broth for one to three days before your test. You will want to talk to your doctor about any **problems this may cause related to your diabetes**.

You will also need to **clear out your colon by taking a strong laxative**. Because laxatives can dry you out, you will want to drink plenty of water.

You should **check your blood sugar more often** the day before your colonoscopy and possibly for a few days after.

Be sure to **set your appointment early in the day** since you will need to go without food the night before the test. If you use insulin, you may need to cut down on how much insulin you take before the colonoscopy.

### What should I tell my doctor?

Tell your colonoscopy doctor that you have diabetes. He/she will need to know any medicine you are taking. Be sure to tell your doctor if you are on warfarin (Coumadin), blood thinners, or any anti-clotting medicine. You may need special advice from your doctor.

See reverse side for more detailed tips related to diabetes.



# SPECIAL TIPS

## For patients with diabetes

People with type 2 diabetes have an increased risk of getting cancer in their colon.\* For people with diabetes, a colonoscopy is a key step in preventing cancer or finding it at an early stage. Extra care needs to be taken to keep your blood sugar levels steady before, during, and after a colonoscopy. The tips below are meant to help you talk with your doctor for the safest experience possible.

- Set your appointment early in the morning. If that is not possible, talk to your doctor about other options.
- The clear liquid diet may contain sugar. This is okay. The sugar replaces carbohydrates you would normally eat with your meals.
- You may need to test your blood sugar more often before and after the test. Test your blood sugar on the morning of your colonoscopy and tell your nurse the results when you get to the doctor's office.
- If you are taking metformin (Glucophage, Actoplus Met, Avandamet, Glucovance, Janumet, Jentaduo, Kombiglyze, Metaglip, Prandimet, or generic metformin), your doctor may have you stop taking it the day before your colonoscopy and begin taking it again the day after your test.
- Other diabetes medicine (including, but not limited to Precose, Glyset, Tradjenta, Onglyza, Victoza, Starlix, Prandin, Diabinese, Tolinase, Amaryl, Glucotrol, DiaBeta, Actos, Avandia, Invokana, Avandaryl, Duetact, Juvisync, Glucose, GlucaGen, Korlym, and Symlin) are usually taken the day and night before your colonoscopy. They are not usually taken the morning of your test. You can usually begin taking your medicine again after you get home.
- If you are taking insulin, check with your doctor or diabetes educator for instructions.
  - If you are taking long-acting insulin Lantus or Levemir, do not stop it. If you are taking long-acting insulin NPH, you will probably take your normal dose the evening before your test, but you may be asked to take only 2/3 of your normal dose the morning of your test.
  - If you are taking rapid-acting insulin (NovoLog, Apidra, Humalog, Novalin R, or Humulin R), your doctor may instruct you to not take any the morning of your test (unless your blood sugar is above 200 mg/dL, in which case you may be instructed to take 1/2 of your usual dose).
- If your blood sugar is high before, during, or after the colonoscopy, you may need to receive an extra dose(s) of insulin.
- Check your blood sugar every one to two hours up to and right after your test. Bring your glucose meter, test strips, and a low blood sugar treatment with you on the day of the test.

\*Source: American Cancer Society <http://www.cancer.org/cancer/colonandrectumcancer/overviewguide/colorectal-cancer-overview-what-causes>