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Bowel Preparation for Surgery

Follow the instructions below to completely empty out the entire length of your intestines prior to surgery. **This is important**, because it will make the surgery safer and will reduce the risk for colostomy. Please purchase well ahead of time each of the following:

- 2 one-quart containers of Gatorade. Keep at room temperature.
- 1 3 oz bottle of Fleets Phospho-Soda oral liquid laxative (over-the-counter)(be sure that you don’t buy the Fleet’s Enema or other Fleets products (!))
- 1 roll of very soft toilet paper for your bowel preparation, or Huggies brand non-scented moist towelettes for wiping, or A & D Ointment (to schmear over your anus, or get all three!).
- Must: healthy, delicious, favorite, easy to prepare foods for you to come home to.
- Note: if you receive any advice from the anesthesiologist about when your last sip of water can be—follow the advice of the anesthesiologist. Otherwise follow this paper.

Two days before surgery:

1. Pack your bag. Stock up on food, as you won’t be driving for at least a week. Ensure or Instant Breakfast drinks, power drinks can give a great boost and are easy.
2. Clean your house. You will be a new and healthier person when you come home!

One day before surgery:

1. Drink an instant-protein drink for breakfast and lunch, with lunch before noon. You won’t be eating dinner.
2. At 4:00pm: Drink half of the bottle of Fleets Phospho-soda (It’s okay to mix the Phospho soda with some water or 7-Up or whatever) then drink one quart of Gatorade. Note: after this combination, you will develop diarrhea, which will become almost clear once the intestines are cleaned out. This can happen quickly, or it could take several hours. Use the soft toilet paper or moist towelettes during your bowel preparation. When your stool fluid is nearly perfectly clear, you may stop drinking...or...if not, then:
3. At 8:00pm: Drink the second half (1.5 oz) of the bottle of Fleets Phospho-soda followed by the 2nd quart of Gatorade. You may stop drinking the Gatorade whenever your rectal outflow is nearly perfectly clear. You will not be hungry during the bowel prep.
4. After you develop nearly clear rectal outflow, continue drinking any clear fluid such as tea, soft drink or even more Gatorade until your urine is pale, dilute, and nearly clear before going to bed. This hydration is important preparation for your comfort the next morning.
5. Call Dr. O’Hanlan’s office if you have any questions about the bowel preparation or medications. Call Dr. O’Hanlan if you cannot follow the above instructions, as she may need to modify them for you, or postpone your surgery.
6. Finish cleaning your home. This is a time for a real cleansing! Finish packing!
7. After midnight: Do not eat or drink anything. (The anesthesiologist may tell you that you can have some clear liquid breakfast on the day of your surgery if your procedure is much later in the day. You may only have clear liquid, but carefully stop eating or drinking precisely according to the anesthesiologist’s instructions.) For your safety, your surgery will be cancelled for another day if you have not followed these instructions correctly.

The day of surgery:

1. Diet: Do NOT eat or drink anything unless instructed specifically to do so. Take your daily prescription medications with a sip of water. Do NOT take Insulin or diabetic medications.
2. Remain available to the hospital by telephone in case your surgery time is changed.
3. Call the hospital (650-367-5627 for Sequoia, 650-696-5754 for Peninsula) if you feel weak from not eating so you can go early to the pre-operative area to get your intravenous fluids started. This will relieve any weakness.