



Taking Picolax and Omnipaque 350 for your CT colonography

You have been advised to take Picolax (bowel preparation) and Omnipaque 350 (liquid dye) in readiness for your CT colonography (examination of your colon). This information will be a little different from the instructions from the manufacturers of Picolax. This is because we want to ensure the best preparation for your procedure.

When taking any bowel preparation you need to be near a toilet. We strongly suggest you do not go to work when having the laxative.

You need to start taking the preparation one day before your appointment.

Why do I need bowel preparation (Picolax)?

It cleans your bowel, so the radiologist / radiographer can examine it well. It is very important that you follow the instructions in this leaflet correctly. If you are not properly prepared, then the procedure may not be effective and may need repeating. You should have had a blood test (within the last 12 months) to check your kidney function. If this is not the case, please contact your GP.

What will the bowel preparation do?

The Picolax preparation has a laxative effect and will make you clear your bowels. It is important that you take all the preparation in order to ensure that the bowel is clear prior to the examination.

Some common side effects of Picolax include nausea, vomiting, abdominal pain and anal pain. You may experience stomach cramps and diarrhoea during the preparation, this is normal. Allergic reactions including rash, itching, redness, swelling and difficulty breathing should be reported and you should seek medical attention.

Vomiting and severe diarrhoea can lead to fluid loss (dehydration) with dizziness, headache and confusion if not treated with fluid and salt replacement. During the period leading up to the examination, it is recommended that you keep drinking clear fluids to prevent you becoming dehydrated. If you feel light-headed, have a glucose drink, e.g. Lucozade/sports energy drink.

What will the Omnipaque 350 do?

The Omnipaque 350 is a liquid dye, which will show up on the CT scan of your bowel, helping the radiologist to read the scan. The body does not take up most of the dye as it will be mixed with any faecal matter (poo) and will eventually pass out of your body.

Routine medications

You should follow any specific advice you have been given with regard to your regular medications. Medications that you may have been asked to temporarily discontinue include:

- Blood pressure tablet (such as ACE inhibitors)
- Diuretics ('water tablets')
- Non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (a type of painkiller, such as ibuprofen)

If you have not received specific advice regarding your regular medications, you should continue to take them as normal. However, you may need to amend the timing. Do not take your regular medications within one hour either side of any dose of the bowel preparation (Picolax).

If you are taking immunosuppression medicine for transplanted organs or have epilepsy or diabetes, you should seek advice from your doctor regarding your medications before taking Picolax.

If you are taking the oral contraceptive pill, you should take alternative precautions during the week following taking the Picolax.

Making changes to your diet

You will also be asked to make some changes to your diet the day before your scan.

You should only have one small meal at breakfast made up of low residue foods; (see table) this will help the Picolax and Omnipaque 350 work correctly.

The day before your scan

Follow these instructions on how to prepare and when to take the Picolax and Omnipaque.

There are also instructions of what to eat and drink the day before your exam.

Throughout the day, drink plenty of clear fluids so you do not get dehydrated. Signs of dehydration include dizziness, headache and confusion.

People with diabetes or restricted diets for religious or ethical reasons should contact the Radiology Appointment Team for further advice.

If you experience problems, seek advice from your GP or contact the X-ray Department on 0118 322 7991.

Timetable for preparation

You need to start taking the preparation **ONE DAY BEFORE** your appointment.

DAY BEFORE THE CT SCAN		
8am before breakfast	Take one sachet of the Picolax - sodium picosulphate	Mix the contents of the sachet in 150mls of cold water. Do this in a large glass or jug, as the mixture may fizz over. Stir the solution for 2-3 minutes. If it becomes warm when you stir it, wait until it has cooled down before drinking the whole solution. The solution will appear cloudy.
8am-9am breakfast	8am-9am BREAKFAST You can drink tea or coffee (with milk and sugar/sweetener, if needed) Choose ONE of the following: • 30g crisped rice cereal or cornflakes with 100mls milk • 2 slices of white bread or toast, with butter or margarine and honey • 1 boiled or poached egg, and 1 slice of white toast with butter or margarine. • 50g of cottage cheese or cream cheese, and one slice of white toast with butter or margarine.	
After Breakfast	Drink 50mls Omnipaque 350	
Nothing else to eat for rest of the day - clear fluids only	Clear fluids These are any liquids that are not cloudy. Examples of clear fluids that are suitable are: • Water • Black tea or coffee (no milk) • Fizzy and non-fizzy soft drinks • Cordials (no juice that is red or purple) • Clear soups like chicken, beef or vegetable broth (strained without any bits) • Gelatine (no red or purple) • 100% cranberry juice (even though it is red there is no dye in it).	
4pm	Take the second sachet of Picolax - sodium picosulphate	
6pm-9pm	Drink 50mls Omnipaque 350	

Further information

If you require any further information please call the X-ray Department at the Royal Berkshire Hospital 0118 322 8368.

To find out more about our Trust visit www.royalberkshire.nhs.uk

Please ask if you need this information in another language or format.

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