

General Discharge Instructions for Colonoscopy Patients

The following are general discharge instructions that apply to most patients. After your colonoscopy procedure is complete, you will be given printed discharge instructions written specifically for you. The doctor will also include pictures from the exam, instructions for follow-up care, and a phone number to contact the doctor should you have any questions/concerns. The nurse caring for you will review discharge instructions with you during your stay in the endoscopy department.

1. If tolerated, consume a soft, low fiber diet for 1-2 days or follow any special diet recommended by your physician.
2. Do not drive, drink alcohol, operate machinery, make critical decisions, or do activities that require coordination or balance for 24 hours.
3. Because air was put into your colon during the procedure, expelling air from your rectum is normal.
4. You may not have a bowel movement for 1-3 days because of the colonoscopy prep. This is normal.
5. Go directly to the emergency room if you notice any of the following:
 - Develop chills (warm to touch), or if you have a thermometer and your temperature is above 101
 - Difficulty breathing or difficulty swallowing
 - Persistent vomiting
 - Severe abdominal pain, other than gas cramps
 - Severe chest pain
 - Black, tarry stools
 - Any bleeding – exceeding one tablespoon
6. Call your physician if the site where your intravenous was started becomes red, swollen, painful, and warm to touch.
7. Your physician has reviewed your pre-procedure medications. Please continue to take those medications as previously ordered. You will be given specific information/education regarding any changes to your medications before leaving.