

INFORMED CHOICES ABOUT
COLONOSCOPY

Pre-Colonoscopy Dietary and Medication Instructions: A Patient Guide

From the Medical Corporation of the Seventh-day Adventist, Taiwan Adventist Hospital Clinic

1. Introduction: Preparing for a Successful Colonoscopy

This guide provides essential instructions for the dietary and medication adjustments required in the days leading up to your colonoscopy. A successful colonoscopy depends on having a clear and clean colon, which allows for the most accurate examination possible. Following these guidelines carefully is crucial for ensuring the procedure is both safe and effective. Please review the following information to understand the time-sensitive steps you will need to take.

2. Seven Days Before Your Procedure: Critical Medication Adjustments

In the week before your colonoscopy, it is vital to review all medications and health supplements you are currently taking. The primary goal of these adjustments is to minimize the risk of complications, such as bleeding, during the procedure.

Seven days before your scheduled examination, you must stop taking the following:

- Anticoagulant or antiplatelet drugs.
- Health supplements such as fish oil, ginkgo, ginseng, red yeast rice, and Natto.

Notice: Never stop taking a prescribed medication without authorization. You must contact the doctor who originally prescribed your anticoagulant or antiplatelet medication to get their explicit approval before pausing it for this procedure. This is essential to ensure your primary health condition remains safely managed.

After addressing these medication adjustments, the next step in your preparation involves modifying your diet.

3. Three Days Before Your Procedure: Switching to a Low-Residue Diet

Three days before your appointment, you will begin a "low-residue diet." This specialized diet consists of foods that are easy to digest and leave minimal "residue," or undigested material, in your intestines. Adhering to this diet is a critical step for a successful colonoscopy for several key reasons:

1. **To Reduce Intestinal Residue:** This diet simplifies the digestive process, which results in a smaller volume of stool. This helps ensure your colon is as clean as possible for a clear and thorough examination.
2. **To Minimize Gastrointestinal Irritation:** By reducing bowel movements and mechanical stimulation, the diet allows your intestines to rest and prepares them for the procedure.
3. **To Promote Healing:** For patients who have recently undergone intestinal surgery, a low-residue diet can help support and accelerate the recovery process.

General Dietary Rules

While on the low-residue diet, you must adhere to the following restrictions:

- You must not drink high-fiber soy milk, milk, or nut-based beverages.
- You must not consume fruit juices with pulp or dark-colored juices and beverages.
- You must not eat high-fiber, whole-grain, or multi-grain foods.
- You must not eat vegetables, fruits, green onions, ginger, or garlic.
- You must not consume milk or any dairy products.
- You must avoid irritating, fried, deep-fried, greasy, or spicy foods.

To help you follow these guidelines, the next section provides a detailed table of permitted and prohibited foods.

4. Your Low-Residue Diet Menu: Permitted vs. Prohibited Foods

The following table offers a comprehensive, categorized list to help you easily identify which foods and drinks are acceptable and which must be avoided while on the low-residue diet. Please refer to this list when planning your meals in the three days prior to your procedure.

Food Category	Permitted Foods	Foods to Avoid
Dairy Products	None	All milk and dairy products.
Meat & Fish	Skinless fish, whitebait, steamed or boiled minced lean meat.	Unskinned or processed fish (e.g., capelin, dried small fish), all fatty meats.
Eggs	Steamed eggs, boiled eggs.	Fried eggs, sunny-side-up eggs, braised eggs, "iron eggs."
Bean Products	Soft tofu, tofu pudding (douhua), soy milk (without pulp), as pulp is a form of residue.	Dried tofu, fried tofu, green beans, red beans, etc.
Grains, Starches, & Staples	White rice, congee/rice porridge, plain white noodles (dry or in soup), plain white toast, steamed white buns.	Whole grains (e.g., rice bran, brown rice, oats, cereal, corn, wholewheat products), all root vegetables (e.g., sweet potato, taro, potato), Other bread products not made from refined white flour (e.g., most commercial breads, baked flatbread/shaobing), and fried items like youtiao(long golden-brown deep-fried strip of wheat flour dough).
Nuts	None	All nuts (e.g., peanuts, walnuts, cashews, almonds, chestnuts).
Vegetables & Fruits	Pulp-free apple juice.	All vegetables (including root vegetables, leafy greens, and fibrous gourds like loofah or pumpkin), all fruits (e.g., bananas, papayas), jams, and preserved fruits, as they are high in fiber, which leaves residue in the colon.
Snacks	Sponge cake (without cream).	All other types of desserts and snacks.
Beverages	Pulp-free (clear) beverages (e.g., sports drinks, coconut water, honey water), clear broths.	Dark-colored beverages (e.g., grape juice, cranberry juice), as their coloring can stain the colon and be mistaken for blood during the examination.
Other	None	Irritating seasonings (e.g., chili, garlic, pepper), greasy or strongly flavored soups.