



# Finding Joy in Your Colonoscopy Journey



## Before hand

1. When scheduling – look at my timing idea (on page 3) to help plan a good time.
2. Ask your Doctor about the PILL option for prep day.
  - a. Some people find it less gross than drinking the amount they need to with the other prep option.
  - b. It may cost more – but worth it!
3. If you need to do the drinking kind, ask for the one that requires less liquid.
  - a. It may cost more, but it will be worth every penny!
4. Don't plan anything big for the prep day (day 1)
  - a. You will be fasting (liquids only) and might not have lots of energy
5. Don't plan anything for the actual day (day 2)
  - a. You can't drive for 12 hours afterwards
  - b. You may be tired and not have much energy to do anything
  - c. (some people feel fine right after.... I was tired)
  - d. Give yourself some space to take a nice nap when you get home.

## Supplies to have on hand BEFORE you start.

1. Whatever the **doctor prescribes** for the cleaning out portion
  - a) This is important --- it is worth paying the extra money for the one that requires less drinking. It cost me an extra \$100, but worth it.
  - b) Something to mix the powder with ---- usually Gatorade of some kind is suggested
  - c) Also **ask about the pill version** – it also may not be covered completely by insurance, but I hear it is more pleasant.
2. **Sustenance**
  - a. Broth
  - b. Life savers
  - c. Green Jell-O
  - d. Herbal Tea
  - e. Clear drinks
3. **Comfort**
  - a. Vaseline (big jar with lid that comes off)
  - b. Baby Wipes
  - c. Stool softener (NOT Dulcolax Pink--- that is the wrong kind)
  - d. Preparation-H (in case you get hemorrhoids)
4. **Preparedness**
  - a. Garbage Can with Liner
  - b. Toilet Bowl Cleaner and Brush
  - c. Poo-pourri
  - d. Old Towel
  - e. Adult Diaper
  - f. Comfy Chair
  - g. iPad
  - h. Small table

## Prep Day –

1. Liquid Diet ideas
  - a. broth (helped me feel like I had a meal)
  - b. life savers to suck on was more satisfying than another drink
  - c. green jell-o blast from the past tasted familiar and added a little fun
  - d. hot herbal tea – was super, especially further along in the process when I definitely wasn't hungry, but needed a little warm support
2. When you have to drink the prep stuff
  - a. Make sure it is cold
  - b. Use a straw
  - c. Have hot tea handy... it was a nice thing to have a sip of that in between the long sips of the prep
3. Have an iPad and be prepared to stream some shows
  - a. Definitely can't focus on reading during the cleansing portion of the day
  - b. I streamed Schitt's Creek, which felt very "in theme" for the experience
  - c. Have a charger cord ready, because you may watch so long your battery will run out!
4. Bring in a tiny table to the toilet area
  - a. To put the iPad on, so you don't have to hold it
  - b. I also put my Vaseline and wipes there so they were handy.
5. If you can, put a comfy chair near the bathroom.
  - a. It was nice to be set up all comfy near my bathroom
  - b. So, between pooping I had a quiet, comfy place to wait until I had to poop again.
  - c. Have a blanket handy in case you get cold.
6. Line a small garbage can with double plastic bags
  - a. This is where you will put the baby wipes after you wipe and also the Vaseline covered TP
  - b. This will protect your plumbing, so flushes go down easy
7. Baby wipes
  - a. These feel nice and cool on your bummy.
  - b. Use to dab clean after each poop
  - c. Then use your best friend Vaseline to protect
8. Vaseline is your new best friend
  - a. **Use liberally starting with your very first poop!**
  - b. I found it most helpful to get a big jar and use toilet paper to scoop some out and then apply on the pertinent area.
  - c. Use it EVERY time and use a lot! I did this and never got any burning.
9. Have Toilet bowl cleaner and brush handy.
  - a. I cleaned it 2 or 3 times throughout the pooping experience.
  - b. It somehow made things seem a bit better also cut down on lingering smell
10. Poo-Pourri may be nice to have on hand.
  - a. Give a quick spray or two after you flush, so it is ready before your next poo
  - b. Cutting down on the smell.
11. It is nice to lay an old towel down on the ground between your comfy chair and toilet
  - a. Just in case you don't make it to the toilet in time.
12. Underwear is optional!
  - a. Makes it faster to get on the toilet
13. OR – use an adult diaper
  - a. In case you feel you need them during the prep day
  - b. Or sleeping in the middle of prep day/night
  - c. ALSO, some people feel a little nervous getting in the car to drive to the procedure.
  - d. Having an adult diaper to wear for the drive may give you confidence

## The actual procedure

1. If you are a lady, wear skirt and flip flops...
  - a. Sometimes you can wear the skirt for the procedure, and it is super easy to get redressed after.
2. The procedure is the easy part.
  - a. You get checked in and they take you back,
  - b. They give you anesthesia and within 20 seconds you are asleep.
  - c. You wake up and all is done.
3. Don't plan anything for this day either – except to rest.
  - a. since I didn't get much sleep the night before I took a LONG nap and then just chilled.
  - b. I wasn't supposed to drive for 12 hours after, so luckily I had an extra person to drive Bryson where he needed to be later that afternoon.
  - c. For some reason I thought I just couldn't drive home and would be ok after a few hours.

## My overall impressions of my colonoscopy experience.

It wasn't fun.

But it was doable.

I would say a 4 out of 10 on the discomfort scale.

It was more just kind of gross than anything.

### \*\*\* Timing Idea

And tiring, since I had a 6:30 am appointment, I had to finish my second set of drinks by 1:30 am, which had me pooping until 4.

In retrospect, I think I would have preferred a later appointment and been able to sleep after my first pooping round, which ended around 11pm.

I could have slept until 5 am and taken my second round of drinks, giving my body a bit more of a rest between pooping.

Having something to watch really helped and the Vaseline was a life saver!

I think that the poop in a cup is a good option, if you just really refuse to do the colonoscopy. It is better than nothing!

However, for me it was worth 2 days of my life to make sure my colon is healthy.

The uncomfortable part was only 6 hours or so and it was very manageable.

Super glad I don't have to do it again for 10 years, but when it is time, I feel prepared with my tools to make it easier.

Feel free to share these tips with your friends by sharing this link – [www.sheridanripley.com/colonoscopy](http://www.sheridanripley.com/colonoscopy)