

# How to take Picolax

## Endoscopy Department



**Patient information leaflet**

## **Instructions for patients on how to take Picolax®**

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Please read this leaflet carefully.

Picolax® is used to clear out your bowel before your colonoscopy so that the person performing your test can get a really good view of the lining of the colon. Picolax® works by increasing the activity of the bowel and by reducing absorption of water from the bowel.

### **Please follow the instructions on page 3 and 4**

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- If your appointment is before 12 noon, follow the morning instructions on page 3.
- If your appointment is from 12pm onwards, follow the afternoon instructions on page 4.

## How to take Picolax®

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Below and overleaf are 2 sets of instructions: one is for morning appointments between 07:30am and 11:55am and the other is for afternoon appointments between 12:00pm and 17:00pm.

Please check your appointment letter for your procedure time and follow the appropriate instructions.

### Morning instructions: Appointments from 07:30-11:55am

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#### The day before your examination

You may have a light breakfast but avoid milk or yoghurt. See low residue diet suggestions on the next page.

**Do not eat any more solid food (after 9am) clear fluids only up to two hours prior to the procedure.**

At **10am** mix the first sachet with a cup of cold water (150ml–200ml), stir and drink the solution.

To replace fluid lost from your body, it is important that you drink plenty of clear fluids until your bowel is completely clear. Drink a glass of fluids (about 250 ml) every hour while the Picolax® is working. See opposite for suggestions.

Between **2pm and 4pm** mix the second sachet with a cup of cold water, stir and drink the solution.

#### The day of your examination

You may continue drinking up to two hours prior to the procedure. Then you must be completely nil by mouth.

## Afternoon instructions: Appointments from 12:00-17:00pm

### The day before your examination

You may have a light breakfast and lunch the day prior to your appointment. See low residue diet suggestions on the next page.

**Do not eat any more solid food, (after 12 midday) clear fluids up to two hours prior to the procedure.**

Between **2pm and 4pm** mix the first sachet with a cup of cold water (150ml-200ml), stir and drink the solution.

To replace fluid lost from your body, it is important that you drink plenty of clear fluids until your bowel is completely clear. Drink a glass of fluids (about 250 mls) every hour while the Picolax® is working. See opposite for suggestions.

### The day of your examination

At **7am** mix the second sachet with a cup of cold water, stir and drink the solution.

You may continue drinking up to two hours prior to the procedure. Then you must be completely nil by mouth.

The following are suggestions of low residue foods which can be eaten for breakfast (if you have a morning appointment) and lunch (if you have an afternoon appointment) the day prior to taking Picolax®.

### **Do NOT eat these foods after taking your first dose of Picolax®:**

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- **Fats:** Butter, margarine
- **Cereal:** Crisped rice cereal, corn flakes
- **Eggs:** Boiled, poached
- **Potatoes:** Boiled, creamed, mashed, baked
- **Pasta:** Plain macaroni, spaghetti, noodles
- **Rice:** Plain, boiled white rice
- **Cheese:** Cream cheese, cottage cheese
- **Meat/fish:** Minced or well cooked tender, lean, beef, lamb, ham, veal, pork, poultry, fish, shellfish
- **Gravy:** Using stock cubes (white flour or corn flour may be used to thicken)
- **Bread:** White bread/toast
- **Sugar/sweetener:** White/brown sugar, sweetener
- **Dessert:** Colourless jelly (e.g. lemon, pineapple NOT red fruits)

### **The following are suggestion of fluids that can be consumed up to 2 hours prior to your procedure, but not afterwards:**

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You can drink water, energy drinks, soda water, black tea or coffee, fizzy drinks, squash (but avoid blackcurrant), herbal or fruit teas, drinks made from Marmite, Bovril or stock cubes. **DO NOT DRINK MILK.**

## What do I need to know about Picolax®?

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- Picolax® should not be consumed over a period longer than 24 hours.
- Picolax® can cause dehydration. You should try to drink a glass of fluid (about 250 ml) every hour whilst taking Picolax®. If you experience any symptoms of dehydration such as dizziness, light headedness (particularly when you stand up), thirst or reduced urine output, you should increase your fluid intake. If these symptoms persist or you are unable to increase your fluid intake you should seek medical advice.
- Everybody responds differently to Picolax® but it usually starts working relatively soon after taking it. It is therefore advisable to make sure that you are within easy reach of a toilet.
- Picolax® may cause you to pass loose motions and to prevent your bottom becoming sore you may wish to apply a barrier cream (Vaseline or Sudocream) to the skin around your anus before taking it.
- A sachet of Picolax® should be mixed with 150-200 mls of cold water. Do be aware that the resulting solution can become hot. If so, please leave it to cool down before taking it. Drinking Picolax® through a straw may make it easier to consume.
- The success of your colonoscopy depends on the bowel being clear and the procedure may need to be repeated if the bowel is not sufficiently cleared out. A good result can usually be achieved if you follow the guidance overleaf.
- You should take your routine medications as discussed with your doctor or Endoscopy nurse. Avoid taking your medications less than 1 hour either side of taking Picolax®.
- If you have any questions regarding these instructions please contact the Endoscopy nursing staff on **(01483) 571122** extension **4409** or **4160**.

**Always read the patient information leaflet enclosed with your medication.**



## Contact details

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If you require further information or advice, please feel free to contact us.

### Endoscopy Unit

**Telephone:** 01483 571122 **ext** 4160 (8am–6pm, Monday to Friday)

During out of hours, advice can be obtained from your local accident and emergency department or GP.

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## PALS and Advocacy contact details

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Contact details of independent advocacy services can be provided by our Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) who are located on the right hand side as you enter the main reception area. PALS are also your first point of contact for health related issues, questions or concerns surrounding RSCH patient services.

**Telephone:** 01483 402757

**Email:** rsc-tr.pals@nhs.net

**Opening hours:** 9.00am–3.00pm, Monday to Friday

If you would like information documents in large print, on tape or in another language or form please contact PALS.

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