

# Bowel Preparation before Gynaecology Surgery

## Gynaecology Department Patient Information Leaflet

### Introduction

This booklet is to help you get ready for your endometriosis operation. Even if your surgeon has explained to you what the operation entails, many of us do not take in all of what is said in clinic. This document is intended to help you understand the purpose of the intended treatment. It is not, however, a personalised document and there may be differences between your individual case and the information given here. If you have any queries regarding the information given please discuss them with the consultant or the Endometriosis Specialist Nurse or a member of the medical team (doctors or nursing staff).

### What is bowel preparation?

Bowel preparation involves taking a low fibre diet for three days before the operation and also taking laxatives during the day before the operation. After a light lunch on the day before your operation you may only have 'clear' fluids. If you need 'bowel preparation' it will have been discussed with you in clinic when your operation was being organised.

If you are to be admitted into hospital on the day of your operation, you will need to take your laxative at home. You will need a prescription for a laxative to take to your GP/Pharmacy to dispense the laxative. There are two ways you may be supplied with the prescription; it will either be given to you by a nurse or the

endometriosis specialist nurse during your clinic appointment or posted to you with your admission details. **You do not need to get your own laxatives from the chemist.**

## Why do I need bowel preparation?

If it is known or suspected that treatment may be performed on or very close to the bowel, it is preferable that the bowel is as empty as possible before your operation begins. Also if you have severe endometriosis, extensive adhesions, a large ovarian cyst / mass, 'bowel preparation' may be required.

## What day do I start my diet on?

Please see the chart below and start three days before the day of your operation:

Day of operation:	Start diet on:
Monday	Friday
Tuesday	Saturday
Wednesday	Sunday
Thursday	Monday
Friday	Tuesday
Saturday	Wednesday
Sunday	Thursday

You will find listings of foods allowed and foods to avoid on page 4. There are also some alternatives listed for vegans or vegetarians on page 4 but you are strongly advised to follow the main daily diet as closely as possible for the most effective and safest preparation.

## What diet should I follow?

### Day 1 and Day 2

#### Breakfast

Boiled / poached egg and white bread with a scraping of butter or margarine

#### Lunch

Steamed / poached / grilled white fish or steamed / poached / grilled chicken and either boiled potatoes (peeled) or white bread. Clear jelly for dessert.

## **Supper**

Steamed / poached / grilled white fish or steamed / poached / grilled chicken and either boiled potatoes (peeled) or white bread. Clear jelly for dessert

**You must NOT drink alcohol after day 2.**

## **Day 3**

### **Before your breakfast (and no later than 8am):**

Take the first sachet of your laxative as directed

### **Breakfast**

Boiled / poached egg and white bread with a scraping of butter or margarine

### **Lunch**

Steamed / poached / grilled white fish or steamed / poached / grilled chicken and either a very small amount of boiled potatoes (peeled) or a very small amount of white bread. Clear jelly for dessert.

### **2 hours after lunch (and no later than 4pm):**

Take the second sachet of your laxative as directed.

### **Supper**

Clear soup or a meat extract drink may be taken followed by a clear jelly for dessert

**Following supper on day 3, the following is NOT allowed: solid food, milk in drinks, and alcohol. You should continue to drink plenty of clear fluids throughout the evening and up until two hours before your admission into hospital, especially if you feel thirsty.**

## **The day of your operation**

Clear fluids only until two hours before your admission into hospital (the time will be on your admission letter). No chewing gum is allowed after 6am that morning.

## Foods allowed in a low residue diet:

<b>Meat</b>	Chicken and turkey
<b>Fish</b>	All fish
<b>Dairy products</b>	Eggs, hard cheese, butter, margarine, cooking oil, lard, skimmed and semi-skimmed milk, plain yoghurt, vanilla ice cream
<b>Vegetables</b>	Potatoes only: boiled (without skins) or creamed
<b>Fruit</b>	NONE
<b>Miscellaneous</b>	Sugar, seedless jams, shredless marmalade, boiled sweets, pastilles, golden syrup, clear jelly, salt, pepper, vinegar, tomato ketchup, brown sauce, thin gravy.
<b>Drinks</b>	Tea, coffee, fruit juices, squashes, bovril, oxo, marmite.

## Foods to AVOID in a low residue diet:

<b>Meat</b>	Beef, lamb, ham & bacon
<b>Fish</b>	Wholemeal bread, brown bread, high fibre white bread, breakfast cereals, porridge.
<b>Vegetables</b>	Avoid all vegetables except potatoes
<b>Fruit</b>	Avoid all fresh, tinned, frozen and dried fruit
<b>Miscellaneous</b>	Seeded jams, marmalade with rind, chocolate, nuts, chutney, honey, piccalilli, onions, pickles or any pickled vegetable
<b>Drinks</b>	Chocolate drinks, malted drinks, lager, beer, cider, all fizzy drinks

## Alternative food and drinks

You are strongly advised to follow the main daily diet as closely as possible for the most effective and the safest preparation, however, please see list of alternatives below to the foods on the recommended diet sheet.

- Quorn pieces instead of chicken
- Vegemite, carrot juice, tomato juice or grapefruit juice instead of meat extract drink
- Boiled white rice or pasta (made with durum wheat) instead of boiled potatoes
- Gelatin-free jelly
- Soya milk, soya yoghurt and soya cheese instead of dairy products

## Can I find out more?

Please contact the Gynaecology department on the number below, if you have any further questions.

Leaflets cannot take the place of talks with health professionals. If there is anything you do not understand, you are concerned about any part of the procedure, or you are worried afterwards, please contact:

The Gynaecology Outpatient Department on 01384 244584 (8.30am to 5pm, Monday to Friday)

**This leaflet can be downloaded or printed from:**

<http://dgft.nhs.uk/services-and-wards/obstetrics-and-gynaecology/>

If you have any feedback on this patient information leaflet, please email [dgft.patient.information@nhs.net](mailto:dgft.patient.information@nhs.net)

**This leaflet can be made available in large print, audio version and in other languages, please call 0800 073 0510.**

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