

ADVICE SHEET FOR PATIENTS WHO HAVE BEEN PRESCRIBED AN ORAL BOWEL CLEANSING AGENT

You have been prescribed an oral bowel cleansing agent (sometimes also called 'bowel prep'). This is to clear out your bowels before you have your procedure and ensure that the doctor doing the procedure has a good view of the bowel. This is important to ensure the safety and effectiveness of the planned procedure. There is a risk of developing dehydration, low blood pressure or kidney problems with this medication. The doctor prescribing the oral bowel cleansing agent will have assessed your risk and identified the most appropriate medication for you. **You may also need to have a blood test to check your kidney function unless you have had one within the last 3 months.**

A number of oral bowel cleansing agents are available. You should follow the instructions on the information sheet you have been given with the bowel preparation.

However, the following rules apply in all cases.

- The prescribed dose of oral bowel cleansing agent should not be exceeded.
- The oral bowel cleansing agent should not be taken over a period longer than 24 hours.
- Oral bowel cleansing agents predispose to dehydration. You should maintain a good fluid intake whilst taking these medications. If you develop the symptoms of dehydration, and cannot increase your fluid intake, then you should seek medical attention. These symptoms include dizziness or light-headedness (particularly on standing up), thirst, or a reduced urine production.

You should follow any specific advice you have been given with regard to your regular medications. Medications that you may have been asked to temporarily discontinue include:

- **Antihypertensives** (to lower your blood pressure) such as ACE inhibitors like Ramipril
- **Diuretics** ('water tablets', such as furosemide)
- **Non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs** (a type of pain killer, such as ibuprofen)
- **Iron preparations** (for anaemia, such as ferrous sulphate)
- **Aspirin, dipyridamole, clopidogrel or warfarin** (these agents thin your blood out; you may have been asked to discontinue them depending on the procedure that is planned).

If you have not received specific advice regarding your regular medications then you should continue to take them as normal. However, you may need to amend the timing. You should not take any other medication for 1 hour before and for 1 hour after taking any dose of the oral bowel cleansing agent.

Patients taking immunosuppression for transplanted organs should seek the advice of their doctor before taking an oral bowel cleansing agent.

Patients taking the oral contraceptive pill should take alternative precautions for one week after taking the oral bowel cleansing agent.

If you experience problems, advice from a healthcare professional is available on (01582 497298).

PTO for specific instructions about the drugs you are taking

For patient label

DRUGS TO BE STOPPED BEFORE THE PROCEDURE

Name of drug	Number of days before the procedure this drug should be stopped

If you are still taking warfarin or have stopped warfarin for the procedure, you will need to have a blood test the day before the procedure to check your blood clotting.

All drugs should be restarted the day after the procedure and taken as normal, unless you are given different instructions at the time of the procedure.