



Rehearsal Guide

COLONOSCOPY

*preparing people with intellectual disability /
autism (ID/A) to successfully complete a
colonoscopy*

Introduction for Caregivers

A rehearsal guide contains realistic pictures, concrete ideas, and clear, brief instructions for guiding a person through what can be expected in a specific situation. It includes helpful suggestions for caregivers to follow to make the experience meaningful for the person and increase the likelihood of a successful outcome. This approach is beneficial when supporting people with intellectual disability/autism (ID/A) who are anxious about situations such as doctors' appointments, hospitalizations, and medical testing.

A rehearsal guide provides opportunities for the caregiver to assist the person to learn about a specific situation. It contains information on what is needed and why and explains exactly what can be expected. Such a guide is most effective when it is person-centered and used in conjunction with discussion to allow exploration of specific areas of concern. It can be a powerful tool when used as intended.

The expected result is that the person will then experience the situation in a way that supports health and well-being by being prepared and knowing what to expect. The guide can be used at all stages of the situation to facilitate a positive end result.

Thank you for taking the time to use this tool to work with self-advocates to improve their health outcomes.

How to Use This Rehearsal Guide

For best results, begin to review this rehearsal guide with the person prior to the day of the appointment. Sometimes it will help to review this material with an individual several days or weeks before an appointment; other times, it may be better to wait to review this material until just before the procedure is to take place, perhaps the day before or the morning of the procedure. Together with the individual, determine which will best suit the individual's needs and abilities in understanding the information provided; however, it is important not to wait until 5 minutes before a procedure to introduce this guide to an individual. Give the individual enough time in advance to become familiar with the procedure based on the pictures and information contained on each page and with the individual's abilities in mind.

It is best to review this guide slowly and to focus on one idea/page at a time, allowing the person to talk and/or ask questions after each idea/page is presented. A caregiver may want to share personal experiences related to having this procedure done but be sure to do so in a positive manner, depicting a positive outcome.

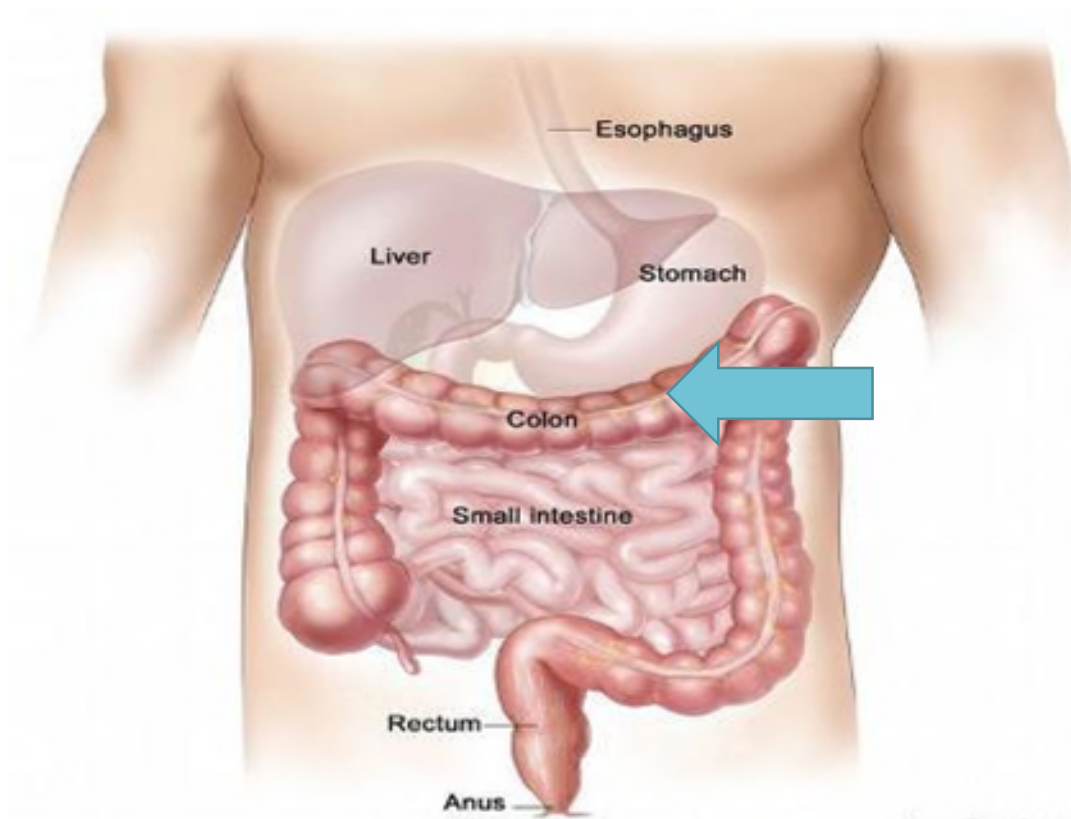
For Best Practices

- ✓ Allot time to review this material when the individual is alert and interested in doing so.
- ✓ Ensure that the setting is free from distraction. Based on the individual's attention span, it may be best to review one page at a time, rather than reviewing an entire guide in one sitting.
- ✓ Explain each picture and practice the suggested exercises with the individual, such as deep breathing, as they appear throughout the guide.
- ✓ On the day of the procedure, take this guide along to continue rehearsing the various steps involved in the procedure. Review each page step by step.
- ✓ Remain positive, calm, and upbeat.
- ✓ Remember to offer positive reinforcement throughout the procedure. If the procedure is not able to be completed, focus on positive aspects. If the individual seems upset, talk about it later when they are calm to find out how they felt and what could be changed or improved to have a better outcome the next time.

INTRODUCING THE PROCESS

(Name of the individual, you are going to have a
test called a **colonoscopy** on *(insert date here)* at
(Name of location).





INTRODUCING THE PROCESS

A colonoscopy test helps your doctor see if your colon is healthy. Your colon is the part of your body that holds poop.

The colonoscopy test will take special pictures of the inside of your colon. The doctor will look at the pictures to see if your colon is healthy.

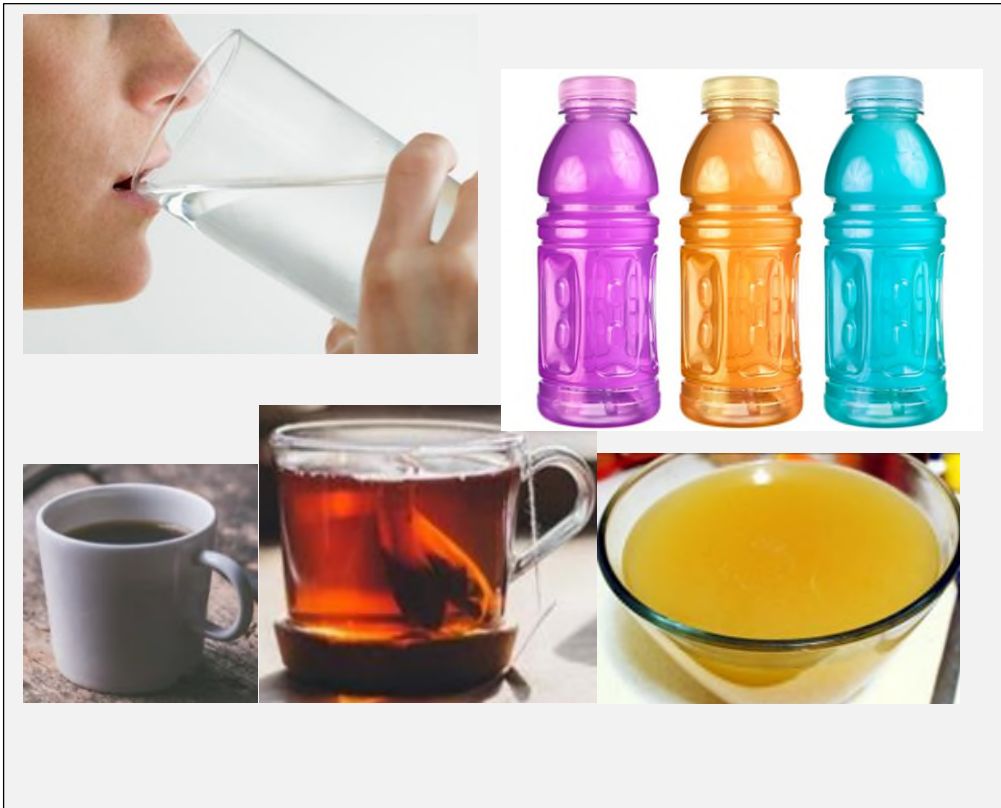
This picture shows parts inside a body. The arrow points to the colon. It looks like a big pink tube



THE DAY BEFORE THE TEST

The doctor will tell you not to eat solid foods on the day before the test. Your colon needs to be empty and not have poop in it.

The doctor will see the inside of your colon best if there is no poop in it.



THE DAY BEFORE THE TEST

You will be allowed to drink clear liquids that are NOT RED.

Clear liquids are liquids you can see through—water, broth, sports drinks, and coffee or tea (without milk).

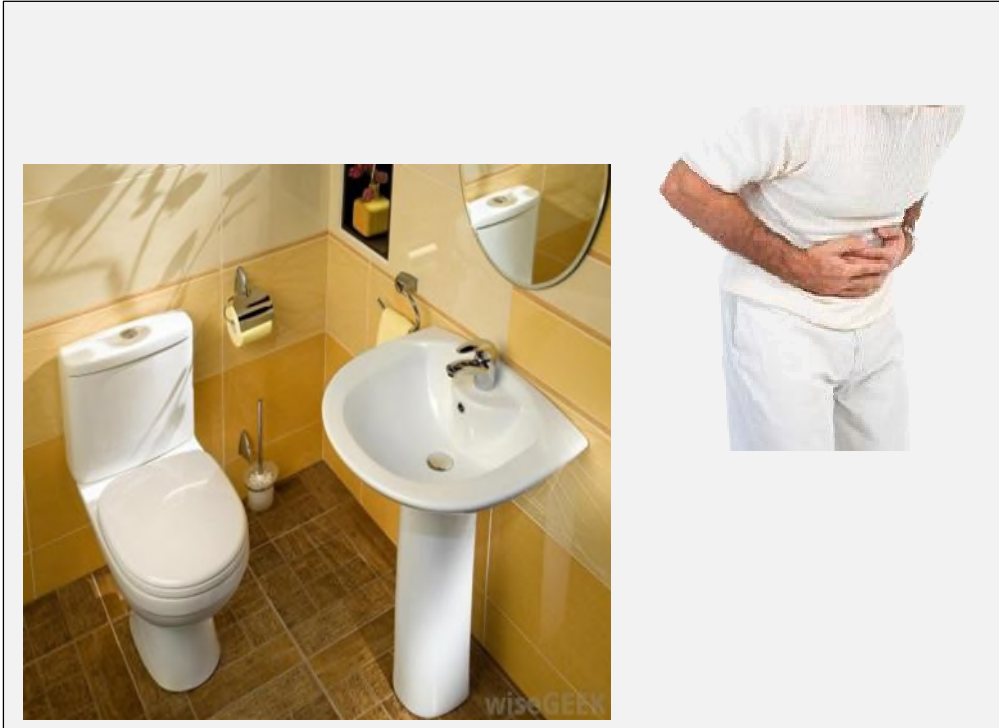
You can ask your doctor for a list of other clear liquids.



THE NIGHT BEFORE THE TEST

You will be asked to drink a special drink the night before the test. Follow the directions and try to drink all of it.

The drink will make you have to poop many times. This is normal. Pooping will make your colon empty and clean.



THE NIGHT BEFORE THE TEST

The drink might make your stomach hurt. This is normal.

You will want to stay close to a bathroom.

If you accidentally poop before you get to the bathroom, we will help you clean up and change clothes.

This happens to many people before a colonoscopy test.

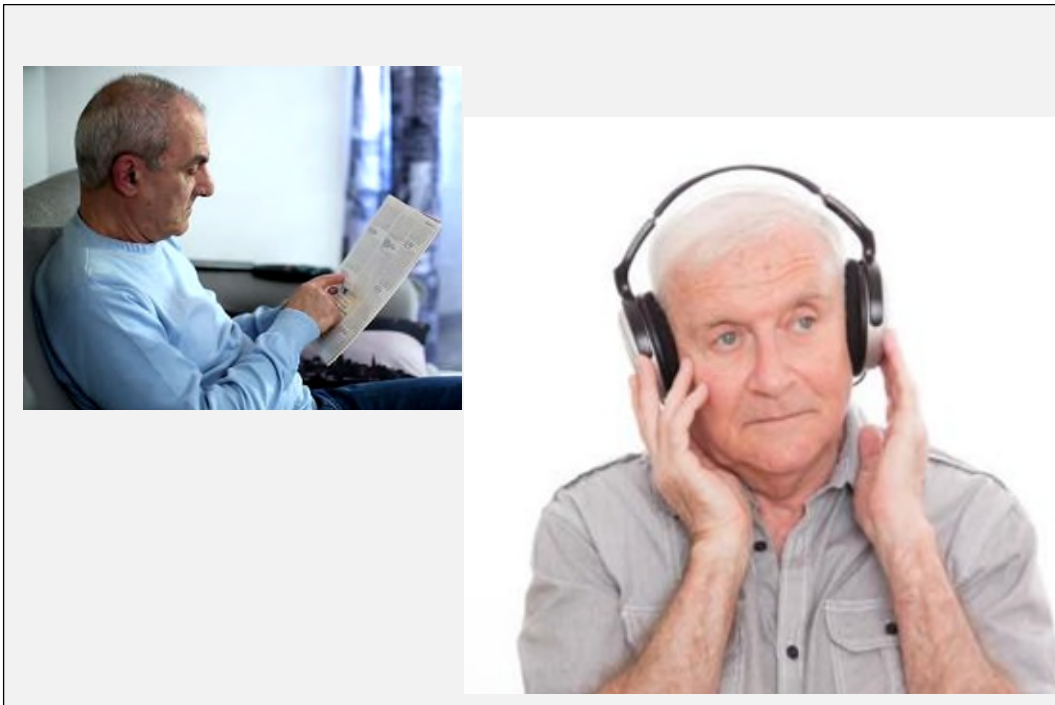


THE MORNING OF THE TEST

Do not eat before your test.

You will feel hungry, but do not eat until after the test.

Try to relax until it is time to leave for your test



IN THE WAITING ROOM

When you get to your appointment, you will wait until someone calls your name.

(Name of caregiver) will stay in the waiting room with you.

If you do not like to sit and wait, bring something to do. Some people read, listen to music, or draw pictures while they wait. We will help you decide what to bring.



CHANGING INTO A PATIENT GOWN

People who work with the doctor will tell you what to do.

It is OK to listen to them. They are there to help you.

Someone will take you to a changing room. You will be asked to take off your clothes and to put on a patient gown.

(Name of caregiver) will stay with you so you feel safe.

Someone will give you a bag; you will put your clothes in it. Someone will tell you where to put your bag of clothes

Note to Caregiver: *You may want to reassure the person that the changing room is private and his or her belongings will be safe. If needed, consider offering to hold the person's bag during the test*



GETTING READY

A person who works with the doctor will help you lie down on a bed. The person will help you lie down on your left side.

(Name of caregiver) might have to wait in the waiting room while the doctor does your colonoscopy test.

(Name of caregiver) will be with you when the test is over.

Note to Caregiver: Help the person practice lying down on the left side. If needed, consider calling the doctor's office or x-ray department to ask if a caregiver is permitted to be in the room until the person is asleep



GOING TO SLEEP

When it is time for your test, someone will carefully put a small needle in your arm or hand. It will feel like a pinch. Try not to move your arm or hand. Take deep breaths to relax. A long tube will connect a bag of medicine to the needle in your arm or hand. This is an IV. The IV gets medicine into your body so you sleep during the test.

Note to Caregiver: Encourage the person to practice taking deep breaths.

DURING THE COLONOSCOPY TEST

While you sleep, the doctor will do the test. You will not feel anything, because you will be asleep.

When you wake up, the test will be over!



AFTER THE TEST

After you wake up, you might feel tired.

(Name of caregiver) will be there to help you.

A nurse will be there to take care of you, too.



ALMOST DONE

When you are awake and able to sit up, you will get to choose what you want to drink—pop, juice, water.

Someone will bring your drink to you.

After you finish your drink, someone will bring your bag of clothes to you. You will be asked to take off the patient gown and put on your clothes. Tell them if you are not feeling well; they will let you rest until you feel better.

When you are dressed and ready, you will go home.



Note to Caregiver: This is a good time to see how well the person understood what was presented. Ask some very brief questions, such as, “Do you know what will happen when you go to have the colonoscopy test?” Revisit this guide as often as needed to ensure the person understands and is prepared when the day of the test arrive

GREAT JOB! YOU CAN DO IT!

It is easy to have a colonoscopy test.

I know you can do it! You always do a great job!



Additional Resources

- Mayo Clinic. (2022, MAY 18). Colonoscopy. Retrieved on August 23, 2022, from [https://www.mayoclinic.org/tests-procedures/colonoscopy/about/pac-20393569#:~:text=A%20colonoscopy%20\(koe%2Dlun%2D,inside%20of%20the%20entire%20colon.](https://www.mayoclinic.org/tests-procedures/colonoscopy/about/pac-20393569#:~:text=A%20colonoscopy%20(koe%2Dlun%2D,inside%20of%20the%20entire%20colon.)
- Web MD. (2020, August 20). Colonoscopy: What to Know. Retrieved on August 23, 2022, from [https://www.webmd.com/colorectal-cancer/colonoscopy-what-you-need-know?&print=true ...](https://www.webmd.com/colorectal-cancer/colonoscopy-what-you-need-know?&print=true...)



For additional information regarding this guide or any of our physical or behavioral health trainings, contact:

**Kepro SW PA Health Care Quality Unit
(Kepro HCQU)**