Veteran Education for Colonoscopy and EGD (Esophagogastroduodenoscopy)

VA MAINE HEALTHCARE SYSTEM
WHAT IS A COLONOSCOPY?

- A medical procedure using a long flexible tube called a colonoscope to look inside the large intestines.
- Performed by a doctor with special training in performing colonoscopies.
- The colonoscope is a long, thin, flexible tube with a tiny video camera and light on the end. The high quality picture from the colonoscope is shown on the TV monitor and gives the doctor a clear, detailed view of your colon.
A COLONOSCOPY IS

- A safe and effective way to evaluate problems such as:
  - Blood loss
  - Abdominal or rectal pain
  - Changes in bowel habits such as diarrhea
  - Abnormalities that may have first been detected by other tests such as a CAT scan or MRI
  - Active bleeding from the large intestines
  - Polyps or abnormal growths in the colon
Several days before your colonoscopy go shopping for your clear liquids. This includes:

- Soda
- Juices
- Jello
- Broth
- Popsicles

**NO RED LIQUIDS**
THE DAY BEFORE YOUR COLONOSCOPY

- Clear liquid diet all day
- Drink as much clear liquid as you want throughout the day to stay hydrated
- Start taking your medications at noon
- Stay close to a bathroom
THE PREP...

- Is the most unpleasant part of the colonoscopy but is the most important.
- If the colon is not clean the doctor will not be able to see and the procedure will be a failure.
- Read over your prep instructions carefully.
- Call and talk with one of the endoscopy nurses if you have questions about your prep. We are here for you...623-8411 EXT: 5014
WHAT IS AN EGD? (ESOPHAGASTRODUODENOSCOPY)

- Is a procedure performed by a well trained specialist
- Use of an endoscope to look at the esophagus, stomach, and duodenum (the beginning of the small intestines)
- An endoscope is a long, thin flexible tube with a tiny video camera and light at the tip.
AN EGD IS

- Also called an Upper GI Endoscopy
- A safe and effective way to evaluate for problems such as
  - Blood loss
  - Abdominal pain
  - Abnormalities that may have first been detected by other testing
  - Difficulty swallowing
  - Ulcers
HOW TO PREPARE FOR AN EGD

- Nothing to eat or drink after midnight the day before your procedure
- Call and talk to one of the endoscopy nurses if you have any questions about your EGD
FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS??

- I feel like vomiting and do not think I can drink anymore, what should I do?
  - It is important that you drink the entire solution. Remember that it is the large volume that helps to empty your bowel. If you do vomit wait 30 minutes and then begin drinking the solution again. You can try drinking 6oz at a time instead of 8 oz.

- One of my medications I take is red can I still take it?
  - Yes, red colored medication are fine to take.

- Why avoid red liquid?
  - The red color can stain the colon and look like blood.

- Is there any way to make this taste better?
  - You can try to suck on hard candy or rinse your mouth with water or mouthwash. Do not eat or drink anything while you are drinking this solution.

- Why do I have to drink so much?
  - The large amount helps flush your system of waste material over several hours. The solution gently washes the bowel clean. It is important that you drink eight ounces every 15 minutes.
FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS?

- I drank a lot of the solution and have not gone to the bathroom yet. What should I do?
  - Keep drinking the entire prep solution. Most people have a bowel movement after an hour, some patients take a little longer.

- I already have diarrhea before taking the prep, do I still have to take the prep?
  - Yes, you must take the prep as directed. Your colon is approximately six feet long and the entire colon must be empty so that the doctor can see clearly.

- I see yellow in the toilet with a few brown flecks. What should I do?
  - If you drank the entire solution or if your last bowel movements were clear enough that you were able to see the bottom of the toilet you should be fine. The yellow color is a result of bile that normally colors the feces, this will not interfere with the exam.

- My bottom is sore. What can I do?
  - To clean the area avoid rubbing. Gently pat with a wet washcloth. Apply Vaseline, Preparation H or Desitin liberally.

- Can I drink alcoholic beverages?
  - No, alcoholic beverages can cause dehydration and some wines may thin your blood.

- Can I chew gum or suck on candy?
  - Yes, but nothing with soft centers or red color.