



## London NHS Diagnostic Service

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### Bowel Preparation for London NHS Diagnostic Patients

Rapid Response Report NPSA/2009/RRR012 – Reducing risk of harm from oral bowel cleansing solutions, reports that death and harm from electrolyte abnormalities, dehydration and serious gastrointestinal problems have been reported following the inappropriate use of oral bowel cleansing solutions (Picolax®, Citramag®, Fleet Phospho-Soda®, Klean Prep®, Moviprep®) prior to surgery and/or investigative procedures. Frail and debilitated elderly patients, children and those with contraindications are particularly at risk from these treatments.

The guidance recommends that a clinical assessment is undertaken by the clinician ordering the surgical or investigative procedure (including GPs using the direct access route) to ensure that there is no contra-indication or special precaution for the use of a bowel cleansing solution.

Responsibility for authorising the use of these medicines is vested in the referring clinician who is clinically responsible for undertaking clinical checks and confirming to the hospital that the patient is fit to receive the medication.

Patients should not be given oral bowel preparation if they have:

- known or suspected gastrointestinal obstruction or perforation, ileus, gastric retention, acute intestinal or gastric ulceration, toxic colitis or toxic megacolon.
- severe acute inflammatory disease.
- severely reduced renal function
- congestive heart failure
- difficulty swallowing
- reduced levels of consciousness
- hypersensitivity to any of the ingredients.

Care must also be exercised with the frail elderly and diabetics.

The referral form will ask you to consider if the patient is fit for the bowel preparation and confirm this by ticking the “yes” box. If the patient is not suitable for oral bowel preparation we suggest you refer the patient for a specialist gastroenterological opinion. All referrals must be made on the London Diagnostics referral form.

At the pre-assessment clinic the nurse will tell the patient about the bowel preparation and issue an information sheet together with the medication. The hospital is responsible for the prescription and dispensing of the products and will rely on your confirmation that you have not identified any contraindications (as listed above).



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If the bowel preparation is not successful the patient will either have an enema (if appropriate) or will be booked again following further instruction on how to take the preparations.

### Summary

The alert RRR012: **Reducing risk of harm from oral bowel cleansing solutions** sets out action for all organisations in the NHS and independent sector where bowel cleansing solutions are used. The process described above will be implemented on the 7 September 2009 and relates to all London Diagnostics Patients attending a BMI Hospital for flexible sigmoidoscopy or colonoscopy, including those referred by NHS Hospitals and Trusts as surveillance or waiting list patients.

If you would like the new version of the Endoscopy referral forms please e-mail [londoninfo@inhealthgroup.com](mailto:londoninfo@inhealthgroup.com), or visit [www.londonnhsdiagnosticservice.com](http://www.londonnhsdiagnosticservice.com) to download the form.

Yours Sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Sarah", written in a cursive style.

Dr. Sarah Wilson  
Medical Director