

Colonoscopy Prep — South Asian & Indian Cuisine Guide

Low-Residue and Clear Liquid Adaptations for South Asian and Indian Foods

Preparing with South Asian & Indian Foods

South Asian diets are rich in legumes, vegetables, and whole grains — many of which are high-residue. This guide helps you adjust familiar meals for the 3-5 days before your colonoscopy.

Low-Residue Foods — South Asian Cuisine

Food Category	Allowed (Low-Residue)	Avoid (High-Residue)
Rice / Breads	White basmati rice, plain idli (white rice batter), naan (plain white flour), white rice dosa (no filling)	Brown rice, whole wheat roti/chapati, multigrain bread, bajra roti, poha (flattened rice with vegetables), upma with vegetables
Proteins	Plain tandoori chicken (no skin), steamed/baked fish, paneer (soft, not fried), scrambled or boiled eggs	All dals/lentils (masoor, toor, chana), chickpeas (chole), rajma (kidney beans), fried pakoras, kebabs with onion, tough mutton/goat
Soups	Clear chicken shorba (strained), tomato soup (strained, no seeds), plain rasam (strained thin)	Sambar (lentils + vegetables), thick dal soups, any soup with whole lentils or vegetable pieces
Vegetables	Peeled soft lauki/bottle gourd, peeled tori/ridge gourd (soft), peeled potato (aloo — boiled/mashed), peeled soft pumpkin (kaddu)	Bhindi/okra, baingan/eggplant, gobhi/cauliflower, palak/spinach, beans (sem), corn, peas, raw salad (kachumber)
Dairy	Plain dahi/yogurt (no fruit), lassi (strained, plain), paneer (soft), milk, chai (strained, with milk)	Raita with cucumber/onion, shrikhand with nuts/fruit, kheer with nuts or rice (whole grain)
Spices / Condiments	Turmeric, cumin powder, coriander powder, salt, ghee, mild garam masala (ground fine)	Whole spices (cardamom pods, cloves, cinnamon sticks), green chili, pickle (achar), chutney with seeds/fiber

Important for vegetarian patients: Most protein sources in vegetarian South Asian diets (dal, beans, chickpeas) are high-residue and must be avoided during prep. Increase paneer, eggs, yogurt, and milk for protein during the low-residue phase.

Sample Low-Residue South Asian Meals

Breakfast: Plain white idli + strained rasam (no solids) + chai with milk

Lunch: White basmati rice + tandoori chicken (no skin) + soft boiled lauki (bottle gourd)

Snack: Plain dahi (yogurt) + ripe banana

Dinner: Plain naan + soft paneer in mild gravy (no onion chunks) + mashed aloo with turmeric

Clear Liquid Day — South Asian Options

- Clear chicken shorba (strained — no solids)
- Strained thin rasam (no tamarind pulp pieces)
- Chai (strained, with milk is OK if no solid spices)
- Nimbu pani/lemon water with honey
- Apple juice, white grape juice
- Clear gelatin, popsicles (NO red or purple)

Avoid: lassi with fruit, buttermilk with spices, mango juice (pulpy), any red/purple drink including rose sherbet (rooh afza).

Questions About Your Prep?

MilenAi Digestive Health offers telehealth consultations with a GI-specialized RN. Get answers about your prep, medications, and what to expect.

consult@milennai.health | milennai.health

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