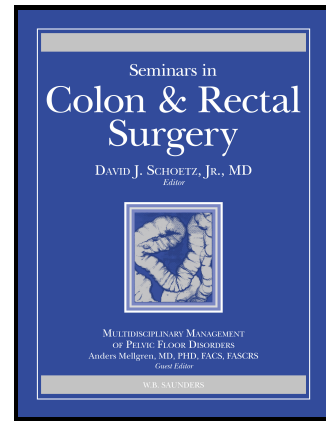


## Author's Accepted Manuscript

The evolution of bowel preparation for gastrointestinal surgery

Julia R. Berian, Neil Hyman



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**JULIA BERIAN, MD, MS**

General Surgery Resident

The University of Chicago Medicine

5841 S. Maryland Ave. | Chicago, IL 60637

773-702-1000

Pager #1103

Julia.Berian@uchospitals.edu

JBerian@facs.org

**Title:** The Evolution of Bowel Preparation for Gastrointestinal Surgery

**Authors:** Julia R. Berian, MD, MS<sup>1</sup>; Neil Hyman, MD<sup>1</sup>

**Affiliation:** <sup>1</sup>Department of Surgery, University of Chicago Medicine, 5841 S. Maryland Ave. Chicago, IL 60637

**Abstract:** Mechanical and antibiotic bowel preparation have swung in and out of favor among gastrointestinal surgeons. The evidence is reviewed for mechanical and antibiotic bowel preparation, respectively. However, the emerging microbiome science represents an opportunity to view bowel preparation differently. The role of the microbiome on the gastrointestinal tract in both health and disease is briefly reviewed. A better understanding of the complexity of the microbiome may provide the impetus to improve and evolve current bowel preparation practices.

## Introduction

Infectious complications have plagued surgeons for centuries. Although it took until 1889 for Louis Pasteur to demonstrate that micro-organisms caused infection, surgeons and physicians had been trying to sterilize wounds with wine, herbs and other concoctions for ages. From a poultice of honey and animal fat in ancient Egypt (now recognized to kill staphylococci and *Escherichia coli* due to hypertonicity) to the polyphenol-rich wine of Hippocrates in Greece and the turpentine and egg-yolk

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