



Patient Prep & Instruction Manual Scheduled Test: GI Barium Enema

Date: _____

Time: _____

Where: Report to Radiology Reception. You should arrive at least 30 minutes before your appointment time in order to be registered.

Purpose: To examine the colon, by coating its inner surface with barium and then distending it with air. In this way, surface appearances can be studied and even small abnormalities detected.

Preparation: If you are a woman of childbearing age and there is a chance you may be pregnant, please consult your physician before scheduling this exam. Medications can be taken prior to your test. Pills should be taken early in the morning, with just a small amount of water.

If you take insulin, you must consult your doctor about adjusting your dose. You should not take insulin if you are fasting for your exam. However, you should bring your insulin with you so you can take it after the exam. Also, when making an appointment, tell the scheduler if you are diabetic and request an appointment time early in the day.

Preparing the colon: It needs to be free of waste matter or feces which could give rise to misleading x-ray appearances similar to those of a tumor. A 10 ounce bottle of Magnesium Citrate and 4 Bisacodyl (Dulcolax) tablets must be purchased from a pharmacy**.

On the day before your examination: ONLY clear liquids may be taken (water, clear apple juice, cranberry juice, bouillon soup, tea or coffee without milk or sugar, Jell-O). Be sure to drink a sufficient amount of fluid.

At 5:00pm drink a 10 oz bottle of magnesium citrate.

At 10:00pm take four (4) Bisacodyl (Dulcolax) tablets with at least one full glass of water. DO NOT CRUSH OR CHEW THE TABLETS, SWALLOW THEM WHOLE.

On the day of the examination: NOTHING further may be taken by mouth. In Radiology, you will be asked to change into a hospital gown. Please do not bring children with you to the appointment. Be sure that your doctor's office has sent an x-ray request form to the department or you can bring one with you. A 10 oz. bottle of magnesium citrate or a packet to mix 10 ounces and Bisacodyl (Dulcolax) tablets can be obtained from any

pharmacy.

Procedure: **The examination:** You will be asked to lie on the x-ray table. A tube will be inserted into the rectum. The radiologist will allow liquid contrast to flow gently into your rectum and this may be followed by the introduction of air. You may be given an intravenous medication to relax your colon. You will be asked to turn several times on the table in order to outline and examine all parts of the colon.

Should you have any difficulty in holding the barium you will find ease in taking deep slow breaths. Do not hesitate to tell the radiologist should you feel unduly uncomfortable, as he may be able to give you relief.

After the images have been taken you will be free to go to the bathroom and evacuate the barium. Sometimes additional images are required following evacuation.

The radiologist's report of the results will be sent to your doctor. Your doctor will discuss the results of the test with you.

After Care: In most patients with normal bowel habits barium will pass in one or two days in the form of "white stools". We do recommend increasing fluid intake. Patients with a history of constipation may take a mild laxative such as Milk of Magnesia.

Please call (215) 662-3518 (GI) if you have additional questions.