We can provide interpreters for a variety of languages, information in larger print or other formats (e.g. audio) - please call us on 01932 723553.

To use the Text Relay service, prefix all numbers with 18001.
WHAT IS A BARIUM ENEMA?

This is an X-ray examination of the large bowel or colon. In order to show the bowel on an X-ray we need to coat the inside walls of your bowel with a white liquid called barium.

HOW WILL THE BARIUM ENEMA BE CARRIED OUT?

You will be asked to remove your own clothing and to wear a hospital gown. You may wish to bring a dressing gown with you to wear while you wait since these are not provided by the hospital.

The barium enema will be carried out in an X-ray room by qualified and experienced health care professionals. This may be a Radiographer or Radiologist.

You will be asked to lie on the X-ray couch and a small soft tube will be inserted into the back passage. The white barium liquid will be introduced gently through the tube into your bowel. This will be followed by some air to distend the bowel.

The doctor (Radiologist) or radiographer will take several X-ray pictures with you lying in different positions.

At the end of the examination the tube will be removed and you can use the toilet adjacent to the room to empty your bowel and make yourself more comfortable.

WHERE CAN I OBTAIN MORE INFORMATION?

The Royal College of Radiologist’s web site www.goingfora.com/radiology contains useful information about X-ray departments, equipment and radiation which may interest you.

Other Websites for additional useful information:

British Society of Gastroenterology – www.bsg.org.uk

The National Society for Colitis and Crohn’s Disease (NACC) – Now known as Crohn’s and Colitis UK. – www.crohnsandcolitis.org.uk

Patient Care society for Gastroenterology – www.pcs.org.uk

Digestive Disorders Foundation – www.digestivedisorders.org.uk

Royal College of Radiologists – www.rcr.ac.uk


Further Information

We endeavour to provide an excellent service at all times, but should you have any concerns please, in the first instance, raise these with the Matron, Senior Nurse or Manager on duty. If they cannot resolve your concern, please contact our Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) on 01932 723553 or email pals@asph.nhs.uk. If you remain concerned, PALS can also advise upon how to make a formal complaint.
To allow us to prevent foreseeable complications we will want to know the following:

- Your medical history. For example if you are diabetic you must ring the Diabetic specialist nurse at least one week before your appointment date for advice to prevent complications occurring from taking the Laxative medicine. Her telephone number is 01932 72 3315.

- You should tell us about any allergies that you may have to medicines / plasters / Latex. We will avoid using anything to which we know you are allergic. If you know you have an allergy to latex, you should inform us as soon as possible so that we can make the necessary arrangements.

Unless otherwise stated, the required information will be taken from you on the day of your appointment.

Radiation Dose

The radiation dose from this examination is small. The National Radiological Protection Board and Royal College of Radiologists advise that it is equivalent to between 1 and 4 years of the background radiation dose that we all receive throughout our lives.

FURTHER INFORMATION

If you have any questions about this examination please telephone 01932 722500

HOW LONG WILL IT TAKE?

The examination usually only takes about 20mins but you should allow at least an hour for your appointment.

WILL I NEED AN INJECTION?

A small injection into an arm vein is commonly required. This stops the normal movement of the gut and helps prevent colicky pains during the procedure.

WHAT IS ORAL BOWEL CLEANSING AGENT? (Citrafleet)

The oral bowel cleansing agent or ‘bowel prep’ is used to clear out your bowels. The prescribed dose of oral bowel cleansing agent should not be exceeded and should not be taken over a period of longer than 24 hours.

There is a risk of developing dehydration, low blood pressure or kidney problems with this medication. Your doctor will have assessed your risk before sending you for the test by performing a blood test to check your kidney function.

You should maintain good fluid intake whilst taking this medicine. If you develop symptoms of dehydration, and cannot increase your fluid intake, then you should seek medical attention. These symptoms include dizziness or light-headedness, thirst, or a reduced urine output.
Your doctor may ask you to temporarily discontinue the following medicines:

- Anti-hypertensives (to lower your blood pressure) or ace inhibitors such as Ramipril.
- Diuretics (water tablets) such as Frusemide.
- Non-Steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (a type of painkiller) such as Ibuprofen.
- Iron Preparations (for anaemia) such as Ferrous sulphate.

If you have not received specific advice regarding your regular medications then you should continue to take them as normal. However, it is preferable to avoid taking them less than one hour either side of the bowel prep.

Patients taking immunosuppressant for transplanted organs should seek the advice of their doctor, before taking the bowel prep.

Patients taking the oral contraceptive pill, should take alternative precautions during the week following taking the bowel prep.

**WHAT PREPARATION DO I HAVE TO MAKE AND WHY IS THIS NECESSARY?**

It is absolutely essential that your bowel is as empty as possible so that we can obtain pictures of your colon and not of the contents. It is therefore most important that you follow the low residue diet and preparation instructions enclosed as the success of the examination depends upon it. If the instructions are not

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**After your Barium Enema**

As soon as the X-ray is finished you will be able to leave the department and resume a normal diet immediately. If possible it is a good idea to arrange for someone to come with you and take you home. You may find that you are a little constipated following the procedure for a couple of days but drinking extra fluid and eating normally should soon return your bowels to normal.

**When will I receive the Results?**

The radiologist will study all the pictures taken and send a report to the doctor who requested the barium enema. You will need to make an appointment to see this doctor to discuss the findings if you do not already have a follow up appointment arranged.

**Are there any Risks or Side Effects?**

During the procedure you may feel as though you want to empty your bowel.

You may experience some discomfort similar to wind when the air is introduced.

It is extremely rare for any damage to be caused to the bowel during a barium enema. If there is a small tear in the bowel wall this will be seen immediately during the procedure and our staff will manage this accordingly at the time.
Water, fizzy drinks, clear soup or meat extract drinks may be taken at any time.

Coffee and tea must now be taken without milk. Sorbets without fruit or nuts and clear jelly are allowed. Boiled sweets, pastilles and peppermints may be taken.

**At 12:00 midday** take one sachet of the laxative. Dissolve the contents in a cup of water, stir well for 2-3 minutes and then drink the mixture. Please take care as the mixture may get hot.

**At 18:00** take the second sachet in the same way.

**NB:** From 12:00 midday onwards you will need to be very close to a vacant toilet. You may carry on drinking clear fluids until you go to bed.

**On the day of the Barium Enema**

You must drink only water or clear fluids before the test. This can include Lucozade or other high sugar drinks but you cannot eat any food until after the barium enema.

**What to do about normal tablets or Medicines?**

Unless you are diabetic you can continue to take any tablets or medicines prescribed by your doctor at the usual time throughout the days of bowel preparation.

followed exactly the examination may have to be postponed and repeated at a later date.

Please now read carefully the instructions for diet and preparation.

**If you are a diabetic you should telephone the Diabetes Specialist Nurse for particular help and advice with the diet and preparation on 01932 722789**

**STRICT LOW RESIDUE DIET**

This must **start 2 days before the appointment** which means the patient has 2 whole days of dieting in addition to the day of the barium examination.

The diet is designed to help to clear the bowel. We realise that it is limited in choice and not very pleasant to follow. However, the success of the examination depends upon it.

You should drink as much liquid as possible for the duration of the diet.

**2 days before the Barium Enema**

You may drink as much as you like of tea and coffee with milk and sugar, smooth fruit juices, squash, fizzy drinks, milk or milk drinks, e.g. Drinking Chocolate, Horlicks, Build Up or Complan.
You may eat any amount of the foods listed below:

Breakfast:
Corn flakes or Rice Krispies. No bran, muesli or high fibre cereals.
White bread or toast. No brown bread.
Butter or substitute. No jam or marmalade.

Lunchtime:
Chicken, ham or fish cooked simply.
Boiled or mashed potatoes only. No other vegetables.
Gravy or sauces, strained to remove any pieces of solid food.

Dessert:
Milk based puddings e.g. custard, dessert mixes, ice cream, sorbet, jelly, cream, yoghurt.
All without fruit pieces or nuts.

AFTER LUNCH AND FOR THE REMAINDER OF THE FIRST DAY
You must now omit all solid food and take your meals in liquid form.

You can choose from:

Any thick soup e.g., vegetable, chicken, cream of tomato, mushroom (all of which must be strained to remove any pieces of solid food) or you can have clear soups, consommé, Bovril, Oxo or Marmite.

Puddings
Milk based puddings as above.

Drinks
As listed above at any time during the day or Build Up or Complan.

Sweets
Boiled sweets, pastilles and peppermints are also allowed.

The day before the Enema
On this day you are allowed a fluid diet only and you must take the bowel prep provided according to the instructions below.

You should drink at least a glass full of water every hour during the day.