



BARIUM ENEMA

Patient _____ Appointment Date _____

Clinician Ordering _____

History/Reason for Exam _____

What is a BARIUM ENEMA exam?

This is an X-ray examination of your large intestine (colon). The purpose of this test is to detect abnormalities or disease that may be in your colon.

How do I prepare for this examination?

It is important that your colon be free of stool at the time of your barium enema. Stool present in the colon during the examination may be mistaken for polyps or tumors and prevent their detection. Therefore, you will be given a colon cleansing preparation kit (the BE prep kit) with instructions on how to take it two days before your barium enema. This preparation consists of dietary restrictions, scheduled fluid intake, oral laxatives, and a suppository.

What can I expect the day of my examination?

Please report to the Providence Imaging Center 15 minutes prior to your scheduled appointment time if you are not already pre-registered (billing information confirmed over the phone). This is where we will verify your billing information. This can be accomplished through pre-registration by calling 212-3151. On arrival to the X-ray department, you will be asked to change into a patient gown.

The examination is performed through the combined efforts of a Nurse Practitioner, a medical professional who specializes in patient examination and medical diagnosis with X-rays, and a Radiologic Technologist, a person trained to work with X-ray equipment. You will be brought into the X-ray room and helped onto the X-ray table. Above you will be the fluoroscope, the camera that will be taking your X-ray pictures. You will be placed on your left side on the X-ray table, and a lubricated enema tip will be inserted into your rectum. The enema tip has a small balloon on the end which when inflated helps to retain the barium in your colon. Through this enema tip, barium will flow into your colon. It is the barium that allows that Radiologist to see and evaluate your colon on the X-rays. As the barium fills your colon, you will likely experience the sensation of wanting to move your bowels.

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It is important that you try your best to hold the barium in until the end of the examination, at which time you may go to the restroom.

Throughout the examination, you will be turned from side to side and various other positions as pictures of your colon are being taken. Periodically through the exam, you will be asked to remain still and hold your breath while pictures are taken.

After the Nurse Practitioner completes the evaluation, he/she leaves the room and Technologist take additional pictures using a different X-ray camera. Meanwhile, the Nurse Practitioner and Radiologist will be reviewing your pictures to determine if additional images will be necessary.

How long will the exam take?

This exam takes approximately 30 - 60 minutes to complete.

How do I get rid of all the barium?

We encourage you to drink extra fluids for the next few days (water, coffee, tea, or fruit juices, etc.) to aid in the passage of the barium remaining in your colon. In the rare event of post-procedure complications, please contact your physician. It is important to tell your physician what test you had and the exact nature of the complications.

How do I find out the result of my barium enema exam?

A Radiologist will review the images from your barium enema and will send a written report to your clinician who will give you the results.

Important Considerations

Any woman who is pregnant or suspects she may be pregnant should let her physician know before scheduling this exam. If you've had a colonoscopy that included a biopsy in the last 7-10 days, you should wait 10 days before this exam is performed to allow the colon time to heal completely from the biopsy.

Providence Imaging Center (PIC) is an independent diagnostic testing facility with two locations: In Anchorage on the east side of the Providence Alaska Medical Center campus, and in Eagle River at 17101 Snowmobile Lane.