



Barium Enema

FACT SHEET

The Niagara Health System is pleased to provide you with general information about your upcoming exam.

WHAT IS A BARIUM ENEMA?

A barium enema is an x-ray examination of your lower digestive tract, which includes the large intestine (colon) and rectum. A liquid called barium is put into the colon so that the colon can be seen on x-ray images.

HOW SHOULD I PREPARE FOR THE BARIUM ENEMA?

Your doctor will provide specific instructions for a bowel preparation which include medications you take to cleanse the bowel, and dietary restrictions to follow the day before the procedure.

It is very important for your colon to be clear for the exam. Any waste (stool) remaining in the colon can obscure the images.

Please allow approximately one hour for the examination.

Please inform the Medical Radiation Technologist, prior to your exam, if you have had any radiation treatment in the past for cancer of the prostate, uterus, or rectum.

WHAT IF I COULD BE PREGNANT?

Please tell the Medical Radiation Technologist if it is possible that you are pregnant. The test will have to be delayed.

WHAT SHOULD I BRING TO MY APPOINTMENT?

Please bring your Ontario Health Card.

Please note that the Niagara Health System is a scent-free environment.

HOW IS THE BARIUM ENEMA PERFORMED?

You will be asked to change into a hospital gown. The Medical Radiation Technologist will assist you onto the x-ray table and you will be asked to turn on your side as a lubricated enema tip will be inserted into your rectum. Barium is passed into the colon and air may also be injected through the tube. The enema tip is specially made to help you hold in the barium, although you may feel an urge to evacuate the barium. You may be asked to turn in different positions.

Once the x-ray images are completed, most of the barium is drained back into the bag and then you will be escorted to a washroom to evacuate any remaining barium. In some cases the Medical Radiation Technologist may take additional images.

WHAT SHOULD I EXPECT AFTER THE BARIUM ENEMA?

You will have whitish coloured bowel movements (from the barium) for up to a few days after the test. You should drink extra fluids (unless you are on a fluid restriction) and eat foods high in fiber such as raw fruit and vegetables to prevent constipation.

HOW WILL I RECEIVE MY BARIUM ENEMA RESULTS?

The pictures are reported by specially trained doctors. The results are sent to your doctor.



Niagara Health System
Système De Santé De Niagara