



niagarahealth
Extraordinary Caring. Every Person. Every Time.

UPPER GI SERIES AND SMALL BOWEL FOLLOW-THROUGH FACT SHEET

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

WHAT IS AN UPPER GI SERIES?

An upper gastrointestinal series or upper GI series, is an x-ray examination of the upper digestive tract which consists of the esophagus, stomach and duodenum.

WHAT IS A SMALL BOWEL FOLLOW-THROUGH?

A small bowel follow-through is an x-ray examination of the small intestine.

HOW SHOULD I PREPARE FOR THE UPPER GI SERIES OR A SMALL BOWEL FOLLOW-THROUGH?

You will be asked not to eat or drink anything after midnight of the night before your examination. Also refrain from smoking and chewing gum.

If you are diabetic, or the exam is to be performed on a pediatric patient, please call your doctor's office for appropriate preparation.

You should allow 30-45 minutes for this examination. You will be asked to remove metal items such as jewelry, eyeglasses and clothing with zippers or metal snaps which may show up on and obscure the images.

WHAT IF I COULD BE PREGNANT?

Please tell the Medical Radiation Technologist if it is possible that you are pregnant. If there is a possibility of pregnancy, 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 UPPER GI SERIES PERFORMED?

You will be given a thick white liquid called barium to drink. Barium coats the lining of your digestive tract so that it can be seen on the x-ray images. You will be asked to move into various positions so the x-ray images can be taken. The Radiologist uses a fluoroscope to take images as the barium moves through the GI tract. The technologist may take additional images.

HOW IS A SMALL BOWEL FOLLOW-THROUGH PERFORMED?

You will be given a thick white liquid called barium to drink. Barium coats the lining of your digestive tract so that it can be seen on the x-ray images. X-rays will be taken at various times until your entire small bowel is coated. The exam may take between 30 minutes up to several hours.

WHAT SHOULD I EXPECT AFTER THE STUDIES?

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 STUDY RESULTS?

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