

### ***How long will the exam take?***

The actual enema procedure takes approximately **15-20 minutes**. However, after the enema you will be sitting on the toilet to try and evacuate the air and barium before you leave.

### ***Aftercare instructions for Barium Enemas***

It is of extreme importance that you **increase your fluid intake** and your **fibre in your diet** for several days following the exam, if this is not medically contraindicated.

You should rest following the examination.

Until all of the barium is expelled your stools will be white or very light colored.

If you do *not* have a bowel movement within 24 hours following the test, you should contact your doctor.

Contact your doctor immediately or go to the emergency department at the hospital if you have any of the following:

- feeling weak or faint;
- abdominal pain;
- constipation, or rectal bleeding;
- are not passing gas; or
- a distended or swollen abdomen.

QUEEN ELIZABETH HOSPITAL



PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND

# **A Guide to your Barium Enema**

## *Patient Information*

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## ***What is a Barium Enema?***

A barium enema is an X-ray exam of the large intestine (colon).

## ***Can I take my usual medication?***

You may take essential medication with a sip of water.

If you are diabetic, **consult your doctor** before taking any medication on the morning of your exam. **Please take your own Insulin with you to the hospital on the morning of the test.**

## ***How do I prepare for this exam?***

If you are a diabetic, you must **consult your physician** regarding your medication *before* beginning bowel prep.

### **TWO DAYS BEFORE YOUR APPOINTMENT** **Do not eat anything after 6 p.m.**

Purchase the following from your pharmacy:

- One (300 mg) bottle magnesium citrate oral solution
- Three bisacodyl (5 mg each) tablets
- One (10 mg) bisacodyl suppository

### **ON THE DAY BEFORE THE EXAMINATION**

#### **AM Breakfast**

- Clear liquids only. Clear liquids include clear soup, plain Jell-O, clear juice (apple, grape, cranberry), strained orange juice or drink made with crystals such as Tang. Popsicle, pop (Ginger Ale or 7-Up). Tea or coffee. **No milk or milk products.**

#### **12 Noon Lunch**

- Continue clear liquids. **No milk or milk products.**

#### **12:30 p.m. (or 1/2 hour after lunch)**

- Drink entire bottle of magnesium citrate oral solution over ice. A strong bowel cleansing action should be expected in **3 to 6 hours** after drinking this preparation.

#### **1:00 p.m.**

- Drink 225 ml (8 oz) water.

#### **3:00 p.m.**

- Take all bisacodyl tablets with a large glass of water. **Swallow tablets whole**, one at a time (do *not* crush or chew the tablets).

#### **4:00 p.m.**

- Drink 225 ml (8 oz) water.

#### **5:00 p.m.**

- Liquid dinner.

#### **6:00 p.m.**

- Drink 225 ml (8 oz) water.

#### **9:00 p.m.**

- Drink 225 ml (8 oz) water.

#### **10:00 p.m.**

- Remove foil wrapper from suppository and insert into rectum as far as possible. **Wait at least 10-15 minutes before expelling**, if possible, even if the urge is strong.

### **ON THE DAY OF THE EXAMINATION**

**Do not have any food or fluids until after the examination.** You may take your regular medications with a **sip of water.**

## ***What will happen in the X-ray room?***

A Technologist and/or Radiologist will perform the barium enema. They will use a combination of barium and air during the examination. The barium will outline the large bowel, the air will distend the bowel. The Technologist and/or Radiologist will monitor the examination on a television screen.