



Rutland Regional Medical Center
Department of Diagnostic Imaging
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BARIUM ENEMA PREPARATION

WHAT IS A BARIUM ENEMA?

This is a diagnostic x-ray examination of your lower digestive tract that will be performed by a radiologist and a technologist. A radiologist is a medical doctor who has specialized in the use of x-rays and other imaging media for medical diagnoses. The technologist has been trained in the proper use of x-ray equipment.

NOTE: Any woman who is pregnant, or could possibly be pregnant, should let your doctor know before proceeding with this exam.

HOW DOES ONE PREPARE FOR THE EXAM?

For the examination to be performed, it is absolutely necessary to have a clean colon.

To prepare for your exam, follow these instructions carefully.

The following medicines are available at your local pharmacy:

- Magnesium Citrate – One (1) bottle
- Dulcolax (Bisacodyl) – Two (2) tablets
- Dulcolax (Bisacodyl) – One (1) suppository

NOTE: If you have severe diarrhea or considerable rectal bleeding, consult your doctor before taking the laxative requested below.

On the day before your exam **EAT OR DRINK ONLY THE FOLLOWING:**

- 8:00 am: You may have your usual breakfast.
- 12 noon: Have a clear liquid lunch without milk products. This meal may include: clear broth, strained fruit juices, clear jello or gelatin, black coffee or tea, carbonated beverages.
- 1:00 pm: Have a full 8 oz glass of water, repeat this every hour until bedtime.
- 4:00 pm: Drink the bottle of Magnesium Citrate. Follow this with a glass of water.
- 6:00 pm: Have clear liquid supper without milk products (same as at noon).
- 8:00 pm: Take the 2 Dulcolax (Bisacodyl) tablets.

NOTE: IT IS VERY IMPORTANT THAT SUPPER BE LIMITED TO ONLY THE ITEMS LISTED.

On the morning of your exam:

Dulcolax (Bisacodyl) suppository should be inserted rectally, 1½ hours prior to arriving at the hospital. You may have clear liquids only for breakfast. If you are an insulin dependent diabetic, check with your doctor regarding the amount of medication you may take prior to the exam.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN DURING YOUR BARIUM ENEMA EXAM?

For this examination you will be asked to remove your clothing and will be given a hospital gown and robe to wear. Upon entering the examination room, the technologist and the radiologist may ask you some questions about your medical problems. You will then be positioned on a table and asked to lie on your side. A lubricated enema tip will be inserted into your rectum. You will then be positioned behind the fluoroscope. An inert liquid contrast media, such as barium sulfate, will be released into your bowel. This liquid allows your lower digestive system to be visualized. As the barium fills the colon, you will feel like you need to move your bowels. The enema tip is specially designed to help hold in the barium. Using the fluoroscope, the radiologist can watch the barium flow into your colon. While this is happening, you will be asked to turn in various directions and at times to hold your breath. After the radiologist has fluoroscoped and taken x-rays, the technologist will take some larger standard x-rays as required by the radiologist. These will be reviewed by the radiologist and at times, more films may be needed.

HOW MUCH TIME SHOULD YOU ALLOW FOR YOUR EXAM?

You will need to arrive at the hospital **15** minutes before your appointment time to register at Outpatient Registration. Then you will be directed to the Diagnostic Imaging Department for your exam. The average time for a barium enema series is approximately 45 minutes. Both Registration and Diagnostic Imaging are located on the main floor of the hospital.

HOW DO YOU FIND OUT THE RESULTS OF YOUR EXAM?

The radiologist will study your exam and send a written report to your doctor. You must call or make arrangements with your doctor to discuss the results.

WHAT TO EXPECT AFTER YOUR EXAM . . .

The barium contrast material may color your stools slightly whitish for the next day or so. If you have a tendency towards constipation, you may want to ask your doctor for a laxative. You may resume your regular diet after the exam, unless told otherwise by your doctor.

If you have any questions concerning the barium enema exam, you may call the Diagnostic Imaging Department at (802) 747-1755.