Your Xray Appointment: Barium Enema Examination

Western General Hospital

What is a barium enema?

A barium enema is a specialised examination using barium fluid and x-rays to show the outline of the large bowel.

What preparation will I require?

Two days before the examination you may eat any of the following:–

- Up to 4 slices of white bread or smooth textured brown bread.
- Rice crispies, cornflakes, Special K or Ready Brek.
- White flour and flour products e.g. biscuits, sponge cakes, plain scones, white rice or pasta.
- Meat of all kinds including poultry and offal.
- Fish of all kinds.
- Eggs.
- Milk, cream, butter, cheese, smooth or strained yoghurt, ice cream.
- Margarine, vegetable oil.
- Strained fruit juices.
- Peeled fresh potato.
- Shredless marmalade, seedless jam, honey, syrup, chocolate spread, treacle, Marmite, Bovril, lemon curd, clear or strained soup.
- Plain jelly or sorbets.
- Boiled sweets, chocolate or chocolates.
- Tea, coffee, lemonade, carbonated drinks, squashes.

Please drink twice as much fluid as you normally do.

Take 2 laxative tablets at 9.00 PM (bisacodyl).

Please note – The laxative may result in several bowel movements. In some cases it may be several hours before the laxative works but do not go far from a toilet after taking it.

One day before the examination – stay near a toilet

1. 7.30AM Pour 200ml or 8 fl oz of hot water into a wide–mouthed measuring jug. Open one sachet of Citramag and empty the contents into the water. Stir thoroughly and allow to dissolve and cool.
   At 8AM Pour the solution of Citramag powder into a suitable glass and drink.
2. Breakfast, lunch and supper
   Meals should be limited to a clear soup, plain jelly or yoghurt (without any fruit), apple juice or soft drinks, black coffee tea, without cream or milk.
3. Between meals
    Drink as much clear liquid as possible (fruit juice, Bovril, etc). You may drink coffee or tea without cream or milk.
4. 3PM (15.00) Take the second sachet of Citramag as described above.
    Do not eat any solid food.
5. 9PM (21.00) Take the other two laxative tablet (bisacodyl).

On the day of the examination

No solid food is allowed but you may drink water, or tea, or 1 coffee with sugar but without milk, or clear soup as required.

Medication

If you regularly take medicines, please take them with a small amount of water, unless otherwise instructed.

Diabetic patients

You should have received an early morning appointment. If not, please telephone the department and have your appointment time changed.

- Do Not have anything to eat or drink on the morning of your examination.
- Do Not take your insulin or diabetic medication on the morning of your examination.
- DO bring your insulin or tablets with you and a suitable snack to eat after your examination.

If you have any queries consult your Diabetic Specialist.

Important

Ladies – if you think you may be pregnant, please inform the x-ray department before the examination.

On arrival in the department

Please report to reception in the Radiology Department. You will be shown to a changing room where you are able to undress and put on an x-ray gown. A member of staff will answer any queries you may have.

During the examination

A nurse will put a small lubricated tube into your back passage (rectum). Through this tube the radiologist will put barium liquid and air. This may be uncomfortable but should not be painful. You will be asked to lie in different positions, (assistance will be given when required). This allows the radiologist to see various parts of the bowel. This examination takes 25 to 40 minutes.

After your examination

You can dress and go home. We advise you to drink more fluids than normal for one or two days after this examination to prevent constipation.

When will I get my results?

- If you are an Out Patient referral
  The Radiologist will study your examination and send a report to the Doctor who referred you.
• If you are a General Practitioner referral
  Please contact the surgery after 7 – 10 days.

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