

Diagnostic Imaging Department

BARIUM MEAL

A Barium Meal is an X-ray examination of your stomach and upper digestive system.

For the examination to be successful it is essential for your stomach and upper digestive system to be empty, otherwise the examination may have to be repeated.

PLEASE FOLLOW THESE INSTRUCTIONS CAREFULLY:

THE DAY BEFORE YOUR EXAMINATION

Please keep to a light diet which is composed of simply cooked and easily digested foods. Most cooking methods can be used including microwave. **DO NOT FRY**

Omit rich fatty and fried dishes, rich cakes and pastry, highly seasoned foods, tough meats and stringy/fibrous vegetables.

Avoid anything which you know gives you indigestion.

Most other foods are suitable and there is no need for special foods or to sieve or puree anything.

THE DAY OF THE EXAMINATION

You must not eat or drink anything for at least six hours before the examination.

THE EXAMINATION

You will be given some fizzy tablets to swallow with a little water to slightly distend your stomach and then you will be given a cup of creamy mixture (the barium) to drink. This can be seen on an x-ray television screen by the doctor as it enters your stomach and passes into your digestive system.

You will be examined both standing and lying down and the doctor will ask you to turn to different positions as x-rays are taken.

There are normally no ill effects from the barium.

HOW LONG WILL IT TAKE?

The actual examination takes about 20 minutes, but you will probably be in the x-ray department for a total of about 40 minutes. This will allow time for registration, undressing, having the examination and dressing again.

If it is necessary to take further x-ray films of your lower digestive system then the time you are here will be extended.

AFTER THE EXAMINATION

Muscle relaxant

An injection of muscle relaxant sometimes needs to be given during this examination.

This can temporarily affect your eyesight and so there may be a delay of about an hour before you can safely drive.

Constipation

After the examination you will be able to eat and drink normally, but take extra fluids and eat plenty of fruit and vegetables over the next two days to help clear the barium from your bowel.

RESULTS

The doctor who sent you for the examination will get the results within one week.

FINALLY

If you have any questions or concerns please contact us.