



St. Luke's Imaging Services Patient/Family Information

## Barium Enema

### What is a Barium Enema?

A barium enema is a test used to evaluate the large intestine or colon. Barium is a substance that shows up on radiography (x-ray) film. The barium is administered by a tip that is inserted into the rectum. The procedure is performed in Imaging Services and takes about 30 to 45 minutes.

### Special Instructions

Before the exam, please inform your doctor if you are or think you may be pregnant.

If you are normally on a special diet, like a diabetic, you should ask your doctor about planning your diet for this procedure.

If you have a colostomy or active colitis of any type, please inform your doctor before starting this colon prep.

If you have had a sigmoidoscopy or colonoscopy, the barium enema exam should be delayed at least 24 hours. If a biopsy has been done, the barium enema should be delayed 14 days.

Please bring your medication list with you to your exam.

### Preparation

**Please note:** Detailed preparation instructions are listed in this brochure and must be strictly followed or interpretation of the study will be impossible and it will have to be repeated.

Date of examination \_\_\_\_\_

Date to begin prep \_\_\_\_\_

Appointment time \_\_\_\_\_

A barium enema requires that your colon be absolutely clean and free of any fecal material. Preparation for this procedure begins two days before the scheduled date and includes the following dietary schedule:

**\*IF THE DIETARY SCHEDULE IS NOT FOLLOWED, YOUR EXAM MAY NEED TO BE REPEATED OR RESCHEDULED.\***

### Dietary Schedule

**DAY 1:** Two days prior to exam – Follow a low residue diet as described below:

A low residue diet consists of:

- Strained fruit juices - orange, apple, grape or grapefruit
- Cereal – cream of wheat, Farina, or Rice Krispies
- Eggs – any style
- Cottage cheese
- Meat – canned baby meats, baked skinless fish, or finely chopped canned tuna
- Pasta – macaroni, spaghetti, noodles
- Rice – with only oil or butter
- Sweets – Jello without fruit
- No bread, fruit, vegetables, milk, or alcoholic beverages

- Drink water or clear liquid 8 ounces per hour throughout the day. Clear liquids consist of water, tea, jello, 7-Up, Sprite or broth.
- Laxative - 2 Dulcolax tablets at 6 p.m.
- **DAY 2:** One day prior to exam – Follow a clear liquid diet (water, tea, jello, 7-Up, Sprite or broth) as described below:

**Drink clear liquids – 8 ounces each hour – throughout the day.**

7:30 a.m. Breakfast - clear liquids

12:00 p.m. Clear liquid lunch

4:30 p.m. Drink one bottle (10 oz.) of magnesium citrate (a liquid laxative). *Please consult your doctor if you have kidney disease.*

6:00 p.m. Clear liquid supper

6:30 p.m. Take 4 Dulcolax tablets – a laxative to clear the bowel of fecal material.

**Do not eat or drink anything from midnight until after your exam.**

**DAY 3:** Day of Exam – No food, no liquids, no medications until after your exam. You may bring morning medications with you to take after exam.

## Registration Instructions

Arrive 30 minutes prior to your appointment time and register at the West Entrance of St. Luke's Hospital. After registration is complete, the exam will be performed in the Imaging Services Department on the 2nd floor, just off of Elevator A.

## What happens during the exam?

The procedure is done by a radiology physician's assistant or a radiologist, a doctor who specializes in performing and interpreting radiology procedures. While lying on an x-ray table, a tip is inserted into the rectum and chalk-like liquid called barium is released into the colon. To better visualize the colon, air may be used along with the barium. You may be asked to lie in various positions while on the x-ray table while radiographs (x-rays) are taken of different portions of your colon.

Gentle pressure may also be applied to your abdomen to aid in seeing your entire colon. Near the end of the procedure, when the full amount of barium has been given, you may have a sensation of fullness.

When the examination is completed, you will be taken to a nearby bathroom to expel the barium.

You may resume your normal diet after the exam.

## Who interprets the exam?

The radiologist will review all the x-rays and information shortly after the exam is completed. A written report will be sent to your doctor. Your doctor will discuss these results with you. Please allow your physician the time needed to review these results.