



ALEXANDRA MARINE & GENERAL HOSPITAL

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Medical Imaging Manual

PATIENT INFORMATION - Barium Enema

This is an x-ray examination of your large bowel (colon) after it is filled with barium and air, administered by an enema. This procedure has been ordered by your physician. The bowel prep can be purchased at your local drug store or pharmacy. This is now covered by the Ontario Drug Benefit Program.

To have a successful exam, it is imperative to have a clean bowel.

Preferred Bowel Preparation

- **1 Box Pico-Salax:** the box contains 2 packets of bowel preparation. You will need to take them both.
- **Bisacodyl Laxative:** (such as Dulcolax) – 4 tablets (5 mg each)

Day Before the Examination

- Restriction to clear liquids the day prior to procedure (Clear liquids: apple juice, jell-o, chicken broth, Gatorade, popsicles, water, ice, black tea and coffee, pop decaffeinated, if possible, etc.). NO MILK products or other liquid you cannot see through.
- At 8:00 a.m., take 4 Bisacodyl (dulcolax) tablets (5 mg each) by mouth with 1-2 glasses of water.
- Take 1st packet of Pico-Salax at about 11:00 a.m. – mix it in a 5 ounce (150ml) **mug** of cold water. If it heats up, let it cool before drinking. You must continue to stir while drinking the mug of Pico-Salax to ensure all the laxative has dissolved. Drink one glass of room temperature water, or more (and extra clear fluids if desired) each hour over the next three hours to replace fluids lost throughout the cleansing process and to ensure effectiveness of the bowel prep. Most people will have 3-6 watery bowel movements, usually without urgently rushing to the washroom.
- Take 2nd packet of Pico-Salax at about 3:00 p.m. – mix it in a 5 ounce (150ml) **mug** of cold water. You must continue to stir while drinking the mug of Pico-Salax to ensure all the laxative has dissolved properly. Drink one glass of room temperature water or more (and extra clear fluids if desired) each hour over the next 3 hours.
- **Nothing to eat or drink after midnight**

IMPORTANT INFORMATION FOR THE DAY OF THE TEST

Day of Barium Enema Examination

NO BREAKFAST

The only exceptions are diabetic patients who may have a light breakfast on the morning of the barium enema to prevent insulin reaction. Diabetic patients should have an early morning appointment.

Length of Barium Enema Examination

This examination usually takes one hour to complete.

What to Expect

The examination is done in a semi-darkened room. The exam's progress is viewed on a TV monitor. After the films are complete, you will be allowed to go to a nearby washroom.

After the Barium Enema Examination

Drink large volumes of fluid after your x-ray examination for the next few days and resume a normal diet.

Any questions or concerns call 524-8689 ext. 5255 and ask for a Gastric Technologist.

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