

Barium Enema

A barium enema is an x-ray test of the large intestine also called the colon. This test lets your doctor see the lining of your colon and rectum.

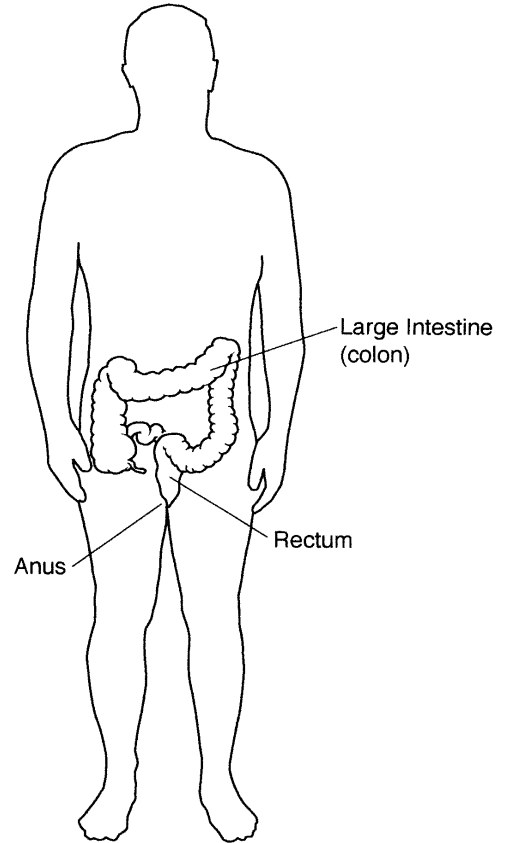
If you take medicines each day, ask your doctor which of your medicines you should take the day before and the morning of the test.

If you are pregnant, or think you might be, tell the staff before the x-ray is taken.

Arrive on time for your test. Plan on this test taking about 1 hour.

Before the test, buy the supplies that are checked below from your local pharmacy.

- A 10-ounce bottle of Magnesium Citrate
- A small box of Biscodyl (Dulcolax) tablets



The Day Before Your Test

Your colon and rectum must be empty of all stool before this test.

- **Do not** eat solid foods or drink milk products.
- **Do not** drink any red or purple liquids. Drink clear liquids only, such as:
 - ▶ Water
 - ▶ Clear broth or bouillon
 - ▶ Clear fruit juices without pulp such as apple, white grape, and lemonade
 - ▶ Clear drinks such as lemon-lime soda, Kool-aid or sport drinks
 - ▶ Decaffeinated coffee or tea without milk or nondairy creamer
 - ▶ Jello or popsicles

- Between 10 AM and 5 PM:
 - ▶ Drink four, 8 ounce or 240 ml glasses of water.
- At 1 PM:
 - ▶ Pour the whole, 10-ounce bottle of Magnesium Citrate over ice and drink it.
 - ▶ Take 2 Biscodyl (Dulcolax) tablets.
- At 5 PM:
 - ▶ Take 2 more Biscodyl (Dulcolax) tablets with 8 ounces or 240 ml of water.
- You will need to use the toilet often during the afternoon and evening.
- After midnight:
 - ▶ Do not eat or drink anything, including water.

The Morning of Your Test

If you are to take medicine, take with sips of water only.

During the Test

- You will wear a hospital gown.
- You lie on an x-ray table below a machine that looks like a TV.
- A tube is put into your rectum. The doctor watches as a barium mixture and some air flows through the tube into your colon. You are asked to roll on your side during the test.
- You may feel cramping and pressure. Take slow deep breaths through your mouth to help you relax.
- X-rays are taken. You will be asked to hold your breath at times.
- The tube will be removed. You will be taken to a toilet to empty the barium and air mixture from your colon.

- Another x-ray may be taken to finish your test.
- Test results are sent to your doctor. Your doctor will share the results with you.

After the Test

You will be able to eat your normal diet. Drink plenty of water and other liquids the next 2 to 3 days. Avoid carbonated drinks during this time because they may cause you to have gas. Eat whole grains, fruits and vegetables, and/or take a mild laxative to help remove the barium. Your stool will be light in color due to the barium for a day or so after the test.

Call your doctor if you do not pass stool for more than 2 days after your test or if you are not able to pass gas from your rectum.

Talk to your doctor or nurse if you have any questions or concerns.