

Barium meal

Radiology Department Patient Information Leaflet

Under Review

What is a barium meal?

It is an X-ray test to show up your oesophagus (food pipe) and stomach. You will be given a drink of liquid barium and this coats the inside of your oesophagus and stomach so that they can be seen on an X-ray.

Why have a barium meal?

Your GP or hospital consultant will have advised that you have your oesophagus and stomach examined. This procedure is a test to investigate symptoms such as stomach pain, and indigestion or heartburn.

Where will it take place?

The examination will take place in the X-ray Department at Russells Hall Hospital. If you need an ambulance to bring you to hospital, please contact your GP Surgery to arrange this.

Do I need to do anything to prepare for the test?

It is important that your stomach is empty for the test and so you will be asked not to have anything to eat or drink for six hours before the test. Also, do not smoke or take any white medicine for six hours before the test.

If you are diabetic, please contact us as soon as possible on 01384 244002.

How is the test performed?

- You will be given a drink of white liquid (barium) and may also be asked to swallow some bicarbonate powder and citric acid. These fizz up when they mix in your stomach and make some gas which expands your stomach – this makes it possible for the radiologist to take better X-ray images.
- You may be given an injection of a muscle relaxant called Buscopan to relax your stomach.
- The radiologist will ask you to move into different positions and will take a series of X-ray images.

How long will the test take?

The test may last up to 30 minutes.

Will it hurt?

No.

Are there any side effects, risks or complications from either the preparation or the test?

You may feel a bit bloated and windy after the test and your stools may be white for a few days due to the barium.

If you had an injection of Buscopan during the examination, you may get blurred vision for about an hour afterwards. If this happens, you should not drive until your vision clears. You may prefer to bring someone with you to drive you home afterwards.

X-ray precautions:

- The procedure uses X-rays and these use a small amount of radiation which may add slightly to the normal risk of cancer.
- In radiology departments every effort is made to keep radiation doses low. The radiation doses from X-ray examinations or isotope scans are small in relation to those we receive from natural background radiation.
- You should tell your GP or hospital consultant about any other recent X-rays or scans you have had, in case they make further examinations unnecessary.

Female patients – you must tell us if you are or might be pregnant. If you are not sure, a pregnancy test will be offered.

What happens after the test?

You will need to drink plenty of fluids for three days afterwards to prevent constipation as you need to clear the barium out of your bowel. You can eat your normal diet after the examination.

When will I know the results?

A radiologist will interpret the X-rays and the results will be sent to your GP, or the consultant who referred you for the test, within two weeks. Your consultant may write to you with the results of the test, or they may be given to you at an outpatient clinic appointment which will be sent to you through the post. If you were referred for the test by your GP, you will need to arrange an appointment to see them for the results.

What are the alternatives to a barium meal?

A gastroscopy is an alternative to a barium meal. You may need to have a combination of tests before your consultant can make a diagnosis. They will explain the options available to you.

Can I find out more?

For more information about this examination you can look at the NHS Choices website:

www.nhs.uk

If you have any questions, if there is anything you do not understand about this leaflet, or if you cannot make the date for the appointment please contact:

Radiology Department on 01384 244002 (9am to 5pm, Monday to Friday)

This leaflet can be made available in large print, audio version and in other languages, please call 0800 0730510

ਜੇਕਰ ਇਹ ਲੀਫਲੈੱਟ (ਛੋਟਾ ਇਸ਼ਤਿਹਾਰ) ਤੁਸੀਂ ਆਪਣੀ ਭਾਸ਼ਾ (ਪੰਜਾਬੀ) ਵਿੱਚ ਲੈਣਾ ਚਾਹੁੰਦੇ ਹੋ ਤਾਂ ਕ੍ਰਿਪਾ ਕਰ ਕੇ ਪੇਸ਼ਟ ਇੰਨਫਰਮੇਸ਼ਨ ਕੋ-ਆਰਡੀਨੇਟਰ ਨਾਲ **0800 0730510** ਟੈਲੀਫੋਨ ਨੰਬਰ ਤੇ ਸੰਪਰਕ ਕਰੋ।

यदि आपको यह दस्तावेज़ अपनी भाषा में चाहिये तो पेशन्ट इनफरमेशन को-आरडीनेटर को टैलीफोन नम्बर **0800 0730510** पर फोन करें।

જો તમને આ પત્રિકા તમારી પોતાની ભાષા (ગુજરાતી)માં જોઈતી હોય, તો કૃપા કરીને પેશન્ટ ઈન્ફોર્મેશન કો-ઓર્ડિનેટરનો **0800 0730510** પર સંપર્ક કરો.

আপনি যদি এই প্রচারপত্রটি আপনার নিজের ভাষায় পেতে চান, তাহলে দয়া করে পেশেন্ট ইনফরমেশন কো-অর্ডিনেটরের সাথে **0800 0730510** এই নম্বরে যোগাযোগ করুন।

إذا كنت ترغب هذه الوريقة مترجمة بلغتك الاصلية (اللغة العربية) , فرجاءا اتصل بمنسق المعلومات للمريض
0800 0730510 على التالفون Information Co-ordinator

حسب ضرورت اور لفظت کو اپنی زبان (اردو) میں حاصل کرنے کے لئے براہ مہربانی ٹیلیفون نمبر **0800 0730510** پر وقت افزائش کو اور ایگزیکٹو (مریٹوں کے لئے معلومات کی فراہمی کے سلسلے میں) کے ساتھ رابطہ کریں۔

Originator: Radiology Department
Date originated: November 2014
Date for review: November 2017
Version: 3
DGH ref: DGH/PIL/00994