

# **BARIUM FOLLOW-THROUGH**

## **What is it?**

A barium follow-through is an examination to look at your small intestine, the part of the bowel between the stomach and colon.

## **What preparation is needed for the examination?**

We need to have your stomach completely empty and ask you **NOT TO EAT OR DRINK ANYTHING FOR 6 HOURS BEFOREHAND.** Please tell us if you are diabetic. Women will be asked about the possibility of pregnancy.

## **What exactly happens during the examination?**

When you arrive in the Department either a radiographer, radiographer's helper or nurse will take you into a cubicle to get you changed for the examination. They will then take you into the x-ray room, where they will explain the examination to you. Please feel free to ask them any questions you may have. The radiographer will give you some Maxalon (metoclopramide) syrup to drink. This is to help the stomach empty and to speed up the examination. You will then drink quite a large volume of dilute barium suspension. This is like a milk shake. You will be asked to lie on the x-ray table, on your right hand side, for 10 minutes. The radiographer will then take a couple of films of your abdomen over the next hour and you may be asked to drink some more of the barium. When the small bowel is filled adequately, the Consultant Radiologist (doctor) will examine you via a TV screen, which may require them to press down on your abdomen to move the bowel

loops around, and they will then take some pictures.

### **Does this procedure hurt?**

The procedure may be a little uncomfortable but is not painful and the examination is very safe.

### **How long will it take?**

The examination usually takes about 1.5 hours, but it depends on how fast the barium goes around your small bowel. It seldom takes longer than 3 hours but you should allow for 2 hours.

### **When will I get my results?**

When you have had the examination, the radiographer will tell you how and approximately when you will get the results but they are usually sent to the doctor who referred you to us within 48 hours.

### **Aftercare**

You can eat and drink normally. The only side effect is that the barium has a constipating effect. Please drink plenty and eat fruit to overcome this. If you suffer with constipation, a mild laxative may be taken.

# HCA

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