

PATIENT INFORMATION

Patient's Name: _____

You have an appointment in the Radiology Department at St. Paul's Hospital on:

Date: _____ **Time:** _____

Please arrive 15 minutes early. This gives you time to check in. Please bring with you photo identification and your CareCard (personal health number).

Please do not bring your children with you unless you bring someone to care for them while you are having the test.

If you are not able to keep your appointment, please call **604-806-8006** as soon as possible. Please give us at least 24 hours notice so we can use your time for someone else. When you call, we will give you another date and time for your test.

Things you need to know

Why am I having this test?

A defecogram (dee-pee-ko-gram) is a special x-ray exam that helps your doctor determine why you are having problems with your bowel movements. You may also hear this test called a defecating proctogram. "Defecate" means to have a bowel movement.

How do I prepare for this test?

★ Please let us know before the test if you have allergies or may be pregnant ★

We ask that you not have a bowel movement the morning of the test.

How long does the test take?

The test takes up to one and half hours to complete.

What happens during the test?

We give you a drink of barium. The barium has little flavour and is thick with a chalky or fine grainy texture. The barium makes your digestive tract show up on the x-ray.

It takes about one hour for the barium to move through your bowel. While this is happening, you may leave the department, go for something to eat or drink if you want. **You must not go to the bathroom to empty your bowels.**

Once the hour has passed, we will get you to change into a hospital gown. You will need to remove your underpants as well.

We take you into the x-ray room and have you lie on your side on the x-ray table.

A tube is put into your rectum (rek-tum), the end part of your large bowel. Then we put a thick barium paste into your rectum and colon (koal-on) through the tube.

After the tube is taken out, we get you to sit on a special portable toilet called a commode.

We take x-ray pictures of your lower abdomen and pelvis while we get you to move, squeeze, and strain certain muscles. We then take pictures as you empty your bowels.

What can I expect after my test?

You can return to your normal activities afterwards.

Barium is constipating (makes it hard to have a bowel movement). For this reason, you should drink plenty of liquids (8-10 cups) for the next few hours after the test. It also helps to eat high fibre foods such as bran, grains, and fresh fruit and vegetables.

Your bowel movements for the next day or so will be chalky and light coloured. This is normal.

If you have any concerns or questions, please call your doctor.

We send your test results to your doctor as soon as possible. If your doctor does not have your results within two weeks, please ask your doctor to contact us.