

Radiology – Fluoroscopy Department

Barium Follow-Through Information Leaflet

Introduction

You have been advised by your doctor to have a barium follow-through examination. This leaflet will explain what the examination involves. It may not answer all your questions, so if you have any concerns or queries, please do not hesitate to call the telephone number on your appointment letter. If you feel unhappy with any part of your care in the X-ray department please ask to speak to a senior member of staff.

Please read this leaflet carefully to make sure you successfully prepare for the examination. You will need to begin your preparation for the examination 2 days before your appointment.

Please contact the X-ray Department if your weight is equal to or more than 205Kg (32 stone) – you may require an alternative examination.

Points to Remember

- Please bring any sprays or inhalers that you are taking with you to your appointment.
- If you are on medication, except insulin, from your doctor please continue



Patient Information

to take it as normal. **You should not take your morning insulin or tablets before the examination.** Please bring your own insulin, and any instructions you have for taking it, with you to the hospital. You may also wish to bring a snack with you to eat after your examination.

- We also ask you to leave any valuable possessions at home.
- **If you are diabetic** and required to starve before the examination you should have been given an early morning appointment (no later than 10.15am). If this is not the case, please phone the number on your appointment letter and ask to be put through to the Fluoroscopy Appointments Officer to rearrange your appointment time. Explain that you have been advised in this leaflet to rearrange your appointment to the next available appropriate time.

What is a Barium Follow-Through?

A barium follow-through is a special X-ray examination of the small intestine. The examination will be carried out by a radiologist (X-ray doctor) who may be assisted by a radiographer and possibly a radiology department assistant. The procedure may take up to 3 hours or longer. We suggest you keep at least the morning free and you may wish to bring something to read to fill the time in between x-rays.

Preparation

- During the **2 days before your appointment** you should follow a low residue diet. Please see the diet sheet on page 3.
- Please do not eat or drink anything for 4 hours before your appointment; however you may have a little water to take your usual tablets

Low Residue Diet Sheet

You may only eat meals made up of the foods listed below

Meat:	Lean meats, poultry, bacon, offal
Fish:	Fresh or frozen, tinned in brine
Cheese:	Any type
Soup:	Strained vegetable or chicken
Eggs:	Boiled, poached, scrambled
Milk allowance:	½ pint daily (full cream, skimmed or semi - skimmed)
Fats:	Butter, margarine - ½ oz daily Or low fat spread - 1 oz daily
Bread: or Chappati:	White only, no more than 4 slices daily Made with white flour (No.1) - not more than 4 daily
Potatoes: or Rice:	Boiled or mashed. 4 egg sized per day only White - 4 tablespoons daily
Crackers:	Plain, not high fibre such as cream crackers
Biscuits	Rich tea, arrowroot
Beverages:	Tea, coffee (milk from allowance), low calorie, sugar free or diet squash or pop, Oxo, Marmite, wine, beer
Seasonings:	Salt, ground pepper, vinegar

Information for diabetic patients on insulin and / or tablets

Do not eat foods or drinks that you would not normally eat — unless you are having a 'Hypo' / low blood sugar. Bring a drink containing sugar (such as Lucozade) with you to the hospital. If, at any time, you feel dizzy and think you are having a 'hypo' or if your blood sugar is less than 4mmol/l, drink half a cup of this drink, and tell the staff you have done so when you arrive.

Risks of the Procedure

X-rays are a type of radiation. We are all exposed to natural background radiation every day of our lives; this comes from the sun, food we eat, and the ground. Exposure to X-rays carries a small risk, but your doctor feels that this risk is outweighed by the benefits of having the test. We will take all safeguards to minimise the amount of X-rays you receive.

Safety

Patients aged 12- 55 years – could you be pregnant?

The risks of radiation are slightly higher for the unborn child so you will be asked to confirm that you are not pregnant before the examination can proceed.

What will happen when I arrive?

- On arrival at the Radiology / X-Ray Department, please report to route 2 fluoroscopy reception where you will be checked in and asked to undress and put on an examination gown. Please feel free to bring your own dressing gown to wear over the X-ray gown.

During your examination

You will be taken into the X-ray room where the examination will be explained to you and you can ask any questions that you may have.

Barium Follow-Through:

- You will be given 2 or 3 plastic cups of barium/water mixture (this is a white chalky fluid which shows up on X-rays), to which sherbert granules may be added to make a fizzy drink. You will be asked to drink them steadily and as quickly as you can.
- To help to speed up the transit of the barium out of your stomach into the small intestine, you may also be given a small measure of a medicine called Maxalon.
- X-ray pictures will be taken with you lying on your tummy or your back at timed intervals, following the barium as it passes through your small intestine. In-between pictures, you may be asked to wait in the Fluoroscopy changing area.

After your examination

- Once the examination is complete you may go home or return to work
- Please remember to drink plenty of fluids over the next few days to avoid constipation
- Your motions (stools) may be pale over the next few days
- If you have any problems after the examination please see your GP

How do I get the results?

The results will not be given to you immediately. They will be sent to the doctor who referred you to us for this examination.

Other Sources of Information:

For information about the effects of X-rays and information about radiology departments visit the NHS website: <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/x-ray/>

Patient Information

Please note that the views expressed in these websites do not necessarily reflect the views of UHCW NHS Trust.

If you have any other questions please ring the telephone number on your appointment letter or call the Radiology Reception on 024 7696 6331.

The Trust has access to interpreting and translation services. If you need this information in another language or format, please contact the telephone number on your appointment letter and we will do our best to meet your needs.

The Trust operates a smoke free policy.

To give feedback on this leaflet please email feedback@uhcw.nhs.uk

Document History

Department:	Fluoroscopy
Contact:	27161
Updated:	December 2021
Review:	December 2023
Version:	8.1
Reference:	HIC/LFT/051/06