

Defaecating Proctogram

An information guide



Defaecating Proctogram

What is a defaecating proctogram?

It is an investigation to demonstrate the ability of your rectum (bowel) to empty.

Who performs your investigation?

Radiologists are doctors specially trained to interpret the images and carry out more complex examinations. They are supported by radiographers who are highly trained to carry out x-rays and other imaging procedures.

How will the investigation be performed?

Once you have booked in at x-ray reception you will be given a suppository and you will be asked to insert it into your back passage. You will be directed into the bathroom in order to do this. You will then be asked to drink one or two cups of liquid barium which will make your small bowel visible on x-ray. One hour after you have drunk the barium you will then be asked into the x-ray room to lie on the x-ray bed. The radiologist will fill your rectum with barium paste by inserting a tube through your back passage. Still in the x-ray room you will then be asked to sit on a special commode and asked to perform various exercises leading up to the defaecation of the barium paste. You will then be asked to defaecate whilst x-rays pictures are being taken so that the mechanism of rectal emptying can be evaluated.

If the examination is also required to evaluate the bladder the radiologist may also pass a tube into the urinary bladder and fill it with a contrast medium (iodinated dye).

What will I feel during the examination?

You may feel the need to urinate and defaecate but should refrain from doing so until the radiologist asks you to do so. It is generally a

painless procedure but you get some mild discomfort. You may feel embarrassed but please be assured that the radiology staff will aim to ensure that you are comfortable and your dignity is maintained throughout the investigation.

What will I be expected to do?

During the investigation whilst you are sat on the commode you may be asked to cough, strain, move and turn in different directions as directed by the radiologist.

How long does the investigation take?

The actual investigation takes about 30 minutes when in the x-ray room. There is the additional hour to wait after inserting the suppository and drinking liquid barium. Please expect to be in the department for around 2 hours in total.

What will happen after the examination?

Once the investigation has finished you will be taken straight to the bathroom to use the toilet and have a wash. You may have pale stools for a short time after the investigation whilst the white barium paste works its way through and out of your body.

How do I get the results of my investigation?

The results of your investigation will be sent to the consultant that referred you for the investigation.

Important - Could you be pregnant?

This examination does involve using a small amount of radiation. This dose is kept to a minimum to reduce the risks to yourself.

This appointment for x-ray **must fall within the first 28 days of your menstrual cycle, counting the day you start your period as day 1.** If this appointment does not fall within these 28 days, or you are at all uncertain, please contact the radiology booking team on 0161 778 2233.

If English is not your first language and you need help, please contact the Interpretation and Translation Service

Jeśli angielski nie jest twoim pierwszym językiem i potrzebujesz pomocy, skontaktuj się z działem tłumaczeń ustnych i pisemnych

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