

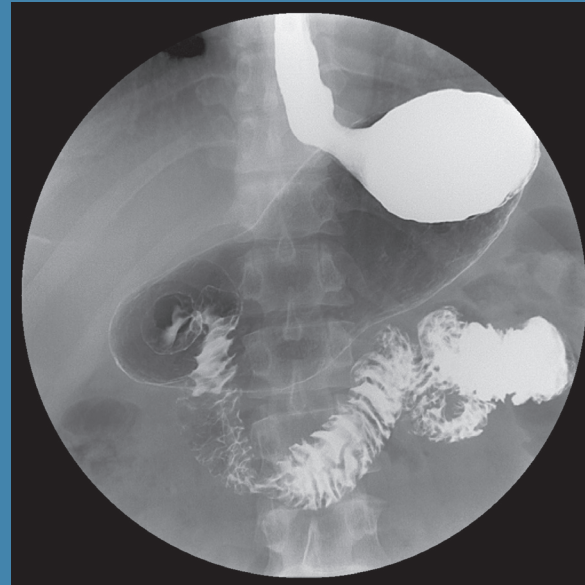
Barium Meal

How long will the procedure take?

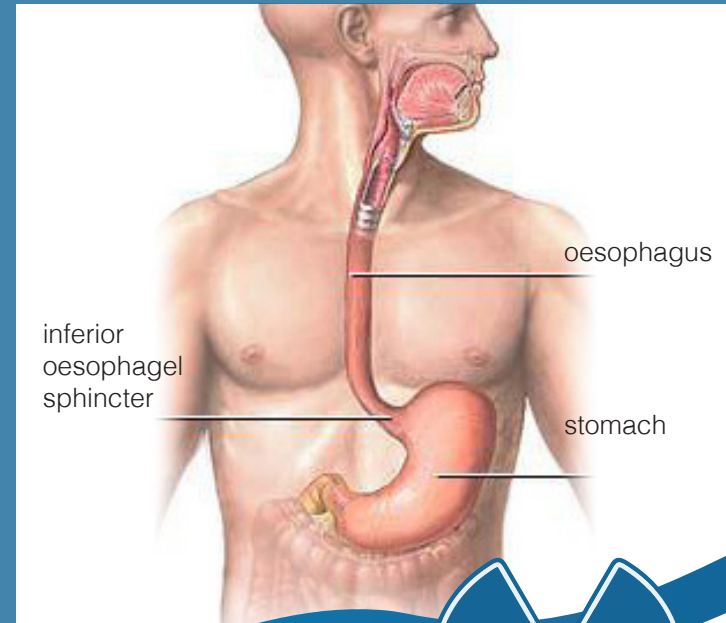
A barium meal usually takes around 30 minutes.

If you are having a Barium Follow-Through examination, images of the abdomen will be taken over a longer period of time, usually 2 to 8 hours but sometimes longer. You may be required to drink more barium or eat food to speed the passage of the barium through the bowel.

Image of a Barium Meal



The image shows the distal oesophagus, stomach and duodenum highlighted by barium and air.



If you have any related previous images from another provider please bring them on the day.

Disclaimer:

The information contained in this brochure is intended as a guide only. If patients require more specific information please contact your referring Doctor.

For more information contact:

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What is a Barium Meal?

A Barium Meal is a study performed to show the position, size and functionality of the stomach and small intestine (or bowel). It is most commonly performed to investigate causes of vomiting and upper abdominal pain.

The study is sometimes performed with a Barium Swallow, which is done to show the oesophagus, or with a Barium Follow-Through, which is performed to show the small intestine.

Preparation

You should fast from midnight the night before your examination.

If you need to take medication with food, you will need to discuss with your doctor the timing of the medication and Barium Meal study.

Procedure

At the time of the examination, you will be asked to remove some or all of your clothes and to wear a gown during the exam. You may also be asked to remove jewellery and any other metal objects or clothing that might interfere with the x-ray images.

You will be given a drink of a liquid called barium which shows up on x-ray images. Barium is a thick, slightly chalky tasting liquid with flavouring added to make it easier to drink.

After drinking the barium, you will be asked to lie on your back on a table. You will be asked to change position on the table during the study as the barium moves through the stomach and small intestine.

The x-ray machine used is called a fluoroscopy machine, which shows the x-ray images as they are being taken so the study can be viewed in real time. Barium outlines the inside of the stomach and small intestine.

Risks of Procedure

The barium you will drink during the study will pass through your bowels and be seen in your bowel motions (faeces) as a white coloured paste.

The barium can cause constipation, so try to drink plenty of fluid and increase your fibre intake for at least three days following the study to reduce the risk of this occurring. One or two extra glasses of water or clear liquid and one or two extra serves of fruit or vegetables will be of benefit.

If you do not have a bowel movement for more than two days after your exam or are unable to pass gas rectally, call your doctor promptly.

You will be able to resume normal activities after the Barium Meal.