



PATIENT INFORMATION BARIUM MEAL

**YOUR APPOINTMENT
TIME IS:**

TIME:

DAY:

DATE:

**PLEASE REMEMBER TO
BRING YOUR REFERRAL AND
ANY PREVIOUS FILMS.**

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What is barium meal/swallow?

Both a barium swallow and a barium meal test involve you swallowing a liquid suspension of barium sulphate before a series of x-rays are taken of your upper digestive tract.

What happens?

In a barium meal test, x-ray images are taken of your stomach and the beginning of your duodenum (the beginning of your small intestine, the passageway that takes food away from your stomach).

Barium is a naturally occurring element that appears white on x-ray. When swallowed, the barium coats the wall of the digestive tract, which allows the shape of your upper digestive tract to be outlined on an x-ray. Without the barium your upper digestive tract would be barely visible on x-ray.

Why are these tests done?

A barium test may be suggested if you are having difficulty swallowing, or if you have chest pain or reflux (backflow of stomach juices into the lower part of the oesophagus), vomiting, indigestion and/or pain in your abdomen.

These tests help doctors to diagnose inflammation, ulcers or tumours in the oesophagus, stomach or duodenum.

How do I prepare for these tests?

You will need to prepare for the examination by not eating, drinking or smoking from 12 midnight the night prior to your appointment. This ensures your

stomach is empty as any food or fluid taken before the examination may give misleading results. Essential medication may be taken with a small sip of water.

If you have special needs e.g. diabetes, please notify the staff when making your appointment.

How long will it take?

The examination is usually completed in 20 minutes, unless your doctor wants the small intestine to be examined, which may take a further 2-3 hours, depending on the speed of fluid throughout the bowel.

Barium tests are available at Illawarra Radiology Group at the following branches:

Wollongong
383 Crown St
Wollongong 2500
Phone: 422878883

Shellharbour
Suite 1, Professional Centre
Stockland Shellharbour 2529
Phone: 42967222

Telephone or visit the most convenient branch to make an appointment.

**PLEASE REMEMBER TO BRING YOUR
REFERRAL AND PREVIOUS FILMS WITH
YOU.**