

Having a water soluble contrast enema

What is a water soluble contrast enema?

This is a special X-ray examination to view the large bowel (colon) after surgery. A special fluid (x-ray dye) is injected into the bowel via a small tube (catheter) and this shows up on the X-ray pictures.

The examination is conducted by a radiologist (a specialist X-ray doctor) or by a senior radiographer (an X-ray professional) who has been specially trained to carry out this test.

What happens during the enema examination?

When you arrive at the X-ray Department we will ask you to change into a hospital gown. You will lie on a couch in the X-ray room. A small flexible catheter (tube) is inserted into your back passage using a water soluble gel and a special fluid is then injected through the tube and a series of X-ray pictures are taken. When the X-ray pictures are complete the test is finished. The examination should take 20 minutes in total.

On the day of your test

- Please bring your appointment letter with you.
- You can eat and drink normally on the day of your test.
- Please bring your stoma kit with you.
- Please do not bring children with you. They will not be able to come into the room with you when you have the test and there are no childcare facilities.

After the enema examination

You will be shown into a bathroom to clean up, the x-ray dye can be sticky. In there, you can get dressed and leave the Department. Adult incontinence pads are available for you to wear home underneath your own underwear. This is to protect your clothes etc, in case of leaks. The fluid used is like water and you may not be aware of leakage. Some patients may experience an increase in discoloured mucus or blood tinged mucus from the back passage, this is normal and nothing to be concerned about.

Are there any risks with this test?

This test involves X-rays. Every effort is made to keep radiation to a minimum.

The special fluid contains iodine. If you are allergic to iodine we may not be able to carry out the test depending on the severity of your allergy, but we will discuss this with you.

Results

The radiologist or senior radiographer will prepare a report of your examination. The report will be sent to the doctor who arranged for the test to be done and they will give you the result.

Further information

If you have further questions you can contact us on 0118 322 7991.

More information is available on the Trust website: www.royalberkshire.nhs.uk

This document can be made available in other languages and formats upon request.

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