



Procedure Information

Barium Swallow and Meal

Introduction

Barium Swallow and Meal is a radiological examination of imaging oesophagus and stomach with the introduction of Barium contrast. The procedure is performed by radiologist under fluoroscopy.

The examination is contraindicated with suspected gastrointestinal tract perforation.

Indications

Your doctor may recommend a Barium Swallow and Meal if you encounter any abnormal symptoms or have concerns, including:

- Discomfort or difficulties when swallowing
- Dysphagia that can be due to tumor or stricture
- Achalasia
- Upper abdominal mass

Procedures

1. You stand erect or sit on the examination table.
2. Radiologist will take a series of x-rays while you are swallowing the barium contrast medium. Gas-producing granules or solution is swallowed afterwards. The stomach is distended, and mucosal folds are clear from each other. The mucosal pattern can be demonstrated clearly with the coat of Barium.
3. You are then asked to roll on the examination table and put in different positions for taking spot films.
4. You may experience abdominal discomfort due to distention of the stomach by gas and barium contrast.

Possible Risks and Complications

1. Uncommon complications:
 - Barium appendicitis if barium impacts in the appendix
 - Conversion of partial bowel obstruction to complete obstruction by impaction of barium
2. Rare but serious complications:
 - Leakage of barium from unsuspected perforation
 - Aspiration of barium
 - Allergy to barium contrast medium

** The risks listed above are in general terms and the possibility of complications is not exhaustive. Please understand that even though all procedures are carried out with utmost professionalism and care, this does not rule out the possibility of complications arising and may require another operation to deal with the complications.

Pre-procedure Preparations

1. The procedure and possible complications will be explained by the doctor and a consent form must be signed prior to the procedure.
2. Please inform the doctor and nurse all your past medical history, previous surgical operations, current medication and any complication with drug or anaesthesia.
3. Female who are or might be pregnant must inform to the staff.
4. Please bring all relevant imaging films and reports for comparison.
5. No smoking for at least six hours before procedure.
6. No food or drink six hours before procedure.
7. Please change into a surgical gown after removing clothing including undergarments, dentures, and jewellery.

Post-procedure Instructions

1. Please drink plenty of water to avoid constipation.
2. The stool may appear white for a few days after the procedure.
3. You can resume normal activities or follow the doctor's instruction.

Should there be any enquiries or concerns, please consult our department (MEI).

Under the professional care of the doctor, you will gradually recover. We wish you all the best during your treatment and recovery.

If you have any questions after reading the entire leaflet, please write them down in the spaces provided in order for the doctor to further follow-up.

Compiled by Union Hospital Operating Theatre (OT) Governance Committee

The above information is for reference only, please enquire your physician for details
Our Hospital reserves the RIGHT to amend any information in this leaflet without prior notification