

DEPARTMENT OF RADIOLOGY

What is a Barium Follow-Through?

A Barium follow-through allows us to look at the middle part of the bowel (the small bowel). Your doctor will have explained why you need to have this done.

Barium is a white substance which shows up the outline of the bowel on X-ray pictures, acting like a temporary dye.

The fluoroscopy machine has an arm coming across which delivers and detects the x-rays.

The examination will be performed by a Radiologist or Radiographer.

How do I prepare for the exam?

- You should not eat or drink anything for 6 hours before the test.
- If you have diabetes that requires treatment by tablets or injection, please telephone 01603 286108 between 9am and 1pm (Monday to Friday) or email for advice.
- Please bring a list of any medications you are taking when you come.
- If you are pregnant or think you are please contact the department.

What does it involve?

- You will be asked to change into a gown before the examination.
- We will give you a solution of barium and gastrografin (an aniseed flavoured liquid) and then a lemon drink. The lemon drink helps the barium pass through the bowel and helps us to get better pictures.
- You will then be asked to lie on a trolley on your right side to encourage the barium to leave your stomach and start going through the small intestine.
- You will then have an x-ray at regular intervals until the barium is seen to have gone through all the small intestine and reached the large intestine (colon).

How long will it take?

The test takes between 1 and 3 hours but can occasionally take longer.

After the examination

You should be able to go home as soon as the test is finished. Some people feel a little sickly for a few hours afterwards. You can eat normally straight after any barium test.

Are there any side/aftereffects?

- The gastrografen may cause diarrhoea.
- See your doctor if you haven't passed any faeces (stools) after three or four days.
- The barium will make your faeces white or pale until it has all come out of your gut (after a day or so).

Information on radiation

As a requirement of the Ionising Radiation (Medical Exposure) Regulations 2017, all patients undergoing an x-ray examination must be informed of the risk and benefits of proposed exposures.

For information on the risks please read the 'How safe are x-rays?' leaflet in the waiting room on arrival in the radiology department and/ or please find information at the following websites

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/x-ray/#are-x-rays-safe>
<http://www.cancerresearchuk.org/about-cancer/cancer-in-general/tests/x-rays>
<https://www.phe-protectionservices.org.uk/radiationandyou/>

If you have any further questions regarding this please ask a member of the Radiology Department during your visit.

Further Information

If you have any concerns or questions, please telephone X-Ray Department on 01603 286103, between 9am and 4.30pm, Monday to Friday.

Access to Radiology

How to find us:	To access Radiology for your appointment, please follow sign to the Urgent Care Centre/Minors (Emergency Department) in front of Carpark G. On entering, turn immediately left and follow signs to the CT/MR Reception. Please note the change in location, which is likely to be different from your previous visits to Radiology.
Hospital transport:	If you are eligible for hospital transport telephone 0333 240 4100
Contact details:	Telephone: 01603 286108 Email: nnu-tr.fluoroappointments@nhs.net Website: http://www.nnuh.nhs.uk/departments/radiology-nnuh