



## Your Small Bowel Meal

# Radiology Department

# Great Western Hospital

If you need to cancel or you have queries or concerns  
please contact the department on

**01793 60 50 59**

Opening Hours

**Monday-Friday 9.00am – 4.30pm**

# Your Small Bowel Meal

## **What is a Small Bowel Meal?**

It is the examination of that part of the bowel, which extends from below the stomach, to the junction of the large bowel.

You will be asked to drink a fluid called Barium so that this area can be seen clearly.

**Because of the length of time it takes for this fluid to reach the small bowel, the examination can take 3-4 hours.**

## **Are there any risks involved?**

The likelihood of complications is extremely rare.

Any concerns you may have can be discussed before we begin the procedure. Alternatively, ring the number given below.

During your procedure you will receive a dose of ionising radiation to help us form images of your body and this will provide your doctor with detailed information.

The radiation dose is always kept as low as possible. The actual dose you receive will vary depending on the type of procedure you are having, but your doctor has considered this and feels that this is the best procedure for you to have to help diagnose or treat your condition.

We are all at risk of developing cancer in our lifetime and the added risk from undergoing your procedure is small and is outweighed because of the benefits it provides and every procedure that you have in Radiology has been assessed to ensure that the benefit outweighs the risk. For more information see the displays within the department or ask a member of staff.



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## **Do I have to have this examination?**

Your doctor has requested this examination, as it is the simplest way of gaining images to diagnose your problem.

## **You must ring for further advice if any of the following applies to you:**

- **You are diabetic and you have concerns about not eating for the period of time given in these instructions.**
- **You are epileptic**
- **You think you may be pregnant**
- **You are breast feeding.**
- **You weigh more than 22 stones / 140 kg. There are weight limits on some of our equipment.**

**The number to ring is: (01793) 60 50 59  
Monday - Friday  
9.30am – 4.30 pm**

## **Before the examination:**

- You should have nothing to eat or drink after the midnight before your examination.
- If you are taking steroids, you must continue to take them as usual.

## **During the examination:**

- You will be asked to change into a gown. There will be someone to help you with this if necessary.
- You will be given some Barium to drink and asked to wait in the cubicle.

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- After about 20 minutes you will have your first xray. You will be asked to lie on your front for this.
- You will then be asked to wait in the cubicle until your next film is due. Several films will be taken at similar intervals, until the barium reaches the junction of the small bowel and the large bowel.
- Sometimes it is difficult to see the small bowel clearly. If this is the case, you will be asked to go into another room. Here a television screen is used so that the necessary images can be obtained.

## **After the examination:**

- The examination does not affect your ability to drive.
- You may return to your normal diet immediately.
- The barium can cause constipation. Drink plenty of fluid for a few days to reduce the possibility of this.
- If your GP sent you, go back to the surgery in 2 weeks.

If a doctor from the hospital sent you, you will receive a letter or a follow up appointment to discuss the results

**This information sheet is available to order in other languages and formats. If you would like a copy, please contact us on 01793 604031 or email [gwh.pals@nhs.net](mailto:gwh.pals@nhs.net).**

### **Document Control**

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