

Barium Enema Exam

How to prepare

This handout gives instructions for most patients who are having a barium enema exam (lower GI exam).



Scan this QR code with your phone camera for a digital copy of this handout.

How do I prepare for the exam?

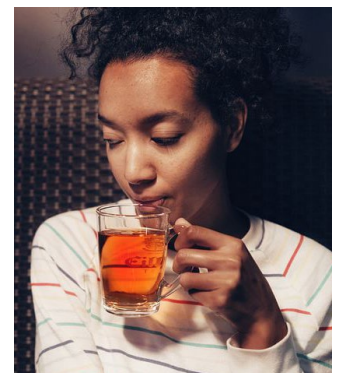
Please Note: If you have a Hartmann's pouch, J pouch, another intestinal device, or if the exam is for an *ileostomy takedown*, you do **not** need to follow the directions in this handout. Simply arrive at the Radiology department at your appointment time.

For all other patients:

- **Talk with your primary care provider BEFORE you follow these instructions if you have any of these conditions: kidney disease, belly pain with cramps, severe diarrhea, severe intestinal bleeding, or inflammatory bowel disease.**
- Tell your provider about any recent illnesses, other health conditions, or any allergies to medicines you might have.
- Tell your provider if you are pregnant or breastfeeding, or if there is any chance you could be pregnant.
- Buy these 3 items at your pharmacy (no prescription needed):
 - 8-oz. bottle of liquid magnesium citrate laxative
 - 1 package of Dulcolax tablets
 - 1 package of Dulcolax suppositories
- Store the magnesium citrate in your refrigerator. It will taste better when it is cold.

For 2 Days Before Your Exam

Have **only** clear liquids (fluids you can see through) **for 2 days before your exam**. You may have clear broth, clear or strained fruit juice (no pulp), coffee, tea, carbonated drinks, or Jell-O. Do **NOT** drink any other liquids or eat solid foods.



You may have only clear liquids for 2 days before your exam.

Day Before Your Exam

On the day before your exam, follow these guidelines. **This is in addition to the clear liquids you are already drinking.**

1 p.m. Drink 8 oz. clear liquid.

2 p.m. Drink 8 oz. bottle of magnesium citrate laxative (cold).

3 p.m. Drink 8 oz. clear liquid.

6 p.m. Take 4 Dulcolax tablets with 8 oz. of clear liquid, by mouth.

7 p.m. Drink 8 oz. clear liquid.

10 p.m...... Drink 8 oz. clear liquid.

Bedtime... Drink 8 oz. clear liquid.

Exam Day

- In the morning, drink **at least** 8 oz. of coffee, tea, or clear or strained fruit juice (no pulp). **Do NOT have anything else.**
- 2 hours before you leave home for your exam:
 - Insert 1 Dulcolax suppository into your rectum.
 - Wait at least 15 minutes before using the toilet.
- Arrive at the Radiology department at your appointment time.

Questions?

Your questions are important. Call your doctor or healthcare provider if you have questions or concerns.

If you have questions, call:

- UWMC - Montlake:**
206.598.6200
- UWMC - Northwest:**
206.668.2073
- Harborview Medical Center:** 206.744.3105

For scheduling, call:

- UWMC - Montlake:**
206.598.6211
- UWMC - Northwest:**
206.598.6211
- Harborview Medical Center:**
206.744.3105