

Defecating Proctogram *(page 1 of 2)*



If you need your information in another language or medium (audio, large print, etc) please contact Customer Care on 0800 374 208 or send an email to: customer care@salisbury.nhs.uk

You are entitled to a copy of any letter we write about you. Please ask if you want one when you come to the hospital.

Please complete The Friends & Family Test to tell us about your experience at: www.salisbury.nhs.uk/FriendsFamily or download our App from the Apple App store or Google Play Store.

The evidence used in the preparation of this leaflet is available on request. Please email: patient.information@salisbury.nhs.uk if you would like a reference list.

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Please read this information leaflet before you attend for your X-ray appointment. If you still have questions or are at all unsure about the procedure please phone the department on 01722 429196.

What is a defecating proctogram?

This is an X-ray examination which is carried out to investigate patients who have problems emptying their large bowel and have symptoms of obstructed defecation or faecal incontinence. It is an X-ray examination of the rectum, (the lower 15 cm of the large bowel) and assesses the way the muscles in this area work. It is not painful. However, we do understand that it is embarrassing to empty your bowels with others present. We therefore do everything we can to ensure that you feel as comfortable, dignified and private as possible.

What are the benefits of the examination?

The X-ray examination provides valuable, detailed information to assist doctors in diagnosing and treating a variety of conditions.

Are there any risks?

- This is a safe procedure, with no known risks or complications.
- The radiation dose is about the same as the average person receives from background radiation over 12-15 months. Special precautions are taken to keep the radiation dose to a minimum.

What if I am pregnant?

This examination is not advised for women who are pregnant or think they may be. Please telephone us straightaway if this applies to you.

What do I do when I arrive in the department?

When you arrive in the X-ray department, please report to reception and take a seat in the main waiting room. From here you will be collected by a member of the team, who will check your details. You will be shown to a private cubicle where you will be asked to undress and put on a hospital gown. The gown should be done up with the ties at the back, Please bring your own dressing gown with you to put on while waiting.

To help diagnosis you will be asked to drink a small amount of barium which highlights the small bowel during the procedure. The barium drink takes a minimum of 30 minutes to travel to this part of the bowel, after which you will be taken into the examination room.

Clinical Radiology

 **01722 336262 ext 4196**

Who will I see?

A small team made up of a radiographer and a radiologist (X-ray doctor) will care for you. A chaperone can be provided.

What happens during the examination?

A radiographer will escort you into the X-ray room, where the radiologist will explain the procedure to you and give you the opportunity to ask questions. You will be asked to lie on the X-ray table where the radiologist will gently insert a small tube into your rectum to allow a small amount of thick barium paste (X-ray dye) to be put into the rectum. The tube will be removed and you will be helped from the table.

You will then be helped to a commode attached to the X-ray machine, and given instructions to strain and empty your bowel, during which time X-rays will be taken. You may be worried that this is a little undignified but please be reassured that we will ensure your privacy at all times, and you will be sitting behind a screen. In total the procedure will take around 10 minutes, but you may be in the X-ray department a little longer.

Does it hurt?

The procedure may be a little uncomfortable, and may give you the sensation of needing to open your bowels, but it should not hurt.

Do I need any preparation before-hand?

No preparation is required.

What will happen after the examination?

You will return to the changing area where you may use the toilet. There may still be a small amount of barium remaining in your rectum, this should pass normally when you open your bowels. This space is available for as long as required, so please take your time and ensure that you feel ready to leave. When you do, you will be able to leave straight away and resume your normal activities.

When will I get the results?

The radiologist who performed the test will study the X-ray images and write a formal written report, which will be sent to the doctor who referred you.

If you have a query about the examination

If you have any questions about the examination please call the telephone number shown below between 9am and 5pm Monday to Friday.