Small Bowel X-ray

Your doctor has arranged for you to have an X-ray called a small bowel study. The radiologist will watch your esophagus (the tube connecting your mouth to your stomach), your stomach and small bowel on a monitor and take some pictures.

How do I get ready?

- Nothing to eat or drink (including water) after 10 p.m. the night before your test.
- If you are diabetic and taking pills and/or insulin, check with your family doctor. You may need some special instructions about taking these medicines before your test. Bring your blood testing equipment to the hospital with you.
- We recommend that you take any medications after your test. If you must take it before, please take it with only a small sip of water.
- Arrive at the Diagnostic Imaging (X-ray) Department 15 minutes before your appointment. Keep in mind that parking is limited at the Victoria General (VG) site.

**Where will the test be?**
It will happen in the Diagnostic Imaging (X-ray) Department.

**What happens during the test?**
- The radiologist and technologist will ask you about your general health. They are also interested in any stomach or bowel problems you have.
- You will get a barium drink. The barium shows up on the X-ray.
- We will ask you to turn from side to side. We will take X-rays in some of these positions.
- You will start standing up, but towards the end you will be lying down. Another X-ray or two may be needed.
- You will get a 2nd glass of barium to drink. You will have to wait in the waiting room until the barium travels through your small bowel (intestine). We will take an X-ray of your abdomen about every 30 minutes to see how the barium is moving along. The total time it takes to complete this test depends on the speed of your digestive system. It can take up to 3 hours or longer.
- We will try to not keep you waiting for your examination. Sometimes it is unavoidable. Our service is very busy, so we ask for your patience if there are delays.
What happens after the test?

• You may notice that your bowel movements are white for a couple of days.
• Drinking extra fluids may help you pass the barium.
• Speak with your family doctor if your bowels have not moved for a couple of days after the test.
• Your doctor will discuss the results of the test with you.

If you have any questions do not hesitate to ask. We are here to help you.

If you can’t keep your appointment, please call the location your appointment is with so that another patient can have your time slot:

(902) 473-3618 QEII and Dartmouth General
(902) 869-6102 Cobequid Community Health Centre
(902) 792-2076 Hants Community Hospital

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The information in this pamphlet is to be updated every 3 years.