

# *Radiology Associates of Ithaca*

"YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD RADIOLOGISTS PRACTICING WORLD CLASS IMAGING"  
101 Dates Drive, Ithaca, New York 14850

## Barium Enema (Lower GI Series)

*What is the test?* The barium enema is used to examine the colon, also called the large intestine, which runs from the small intestine to the rectum. This is an X-ray procedure that utilizes a contrast medium to detect changes in the lining of the colon.

*How do I prepare?* Your colon must be empty at the time of the barium enema. The day before your test, begin a clear diet at noon (broth, water, tea, soft drinks, bouillon, and gelatin are allowed, but coffee is not allowed). At 6:00 p.m., the evening before your exam, administer a Fleet Phosphosoda Enema, following the instructions on the package. (The enema can be obtained over the counter at a pharmacy.) Continue a clear liquid diet until the after the test has been completed.

*What can I expect during the procedure?* Please plan to arrive at the Imaging Services Department 15 minutes before your scheduled appointment. The procedure typically takes about an hour. A technologist will help you onto an adjustable X-ray table. A small tube will be carefully inserted into your rectum and secured with a small balloon that will be inflated once in your rectum. Barium will then be injected into the tube to fill your colon. In most cases, air will also be injected through the rectal tube to optimize imaging. You will be asked to lie as still as possible while X-rays are being taken in various positions.

*What happens after the test?* When the X-rays are completed, you will have the chance to empty your bowels. You may also be given a laxative or enema to avoid constipation. Drink lots of fluids and eat what you normally do. Your bowel movements may look chalky for a day or two after the procedure, which is to be expected.

*How and when will I get my test results?* Typically, within 48 hours a written report of your test results will be sent to your referring physician, who will review them with you. Additional time (3 to 5 days) may be required if we are comparing these test results to previous findings from another hospital or health-care provider.

*Where is the test performed?* Barium enemas are performed in the Imaging Services Department at Cayuga Medical Center, 101 Dates Drive off NYS Route 96 in Ithaca.