

**Patient
Information**

Barium swallow aftercare instructions

Introduction

You have been given this leaflet as you or someone you care for has had a Barium Swallow. A Barium Swallow is an examination of the food pipe (oesophagus) and stomach. The complete removal of barium from your digestive system usually takes between 24 hours and 72 hours. This leaflet tells you what to expect after having this procedure and suggests ways to help.

Hydration

Drink plenty of water. This helps flush the barium from your digestive system and prevents constipation.

Activity

You may resume your normal activities after the procedure has been completed. These may include:

- Driving
- Eating
- Drinking
- Exercise

Additional information

- After your visit, the radiologist will look at your images and make a report on the findings.
- Your doctor will receive the results of your examination within 4 weeks.

Common side effects

- White/light-coloured stool for 24 to 72 hours as the barium passes through your system.
- Temporarily unable to pass stool or changes in bowel movements for 24 to 72 hours.

Reference No.

GHPI1913_09_25

Department

Radiology

Review due

September 2028

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When to contact your healthcare provider

Contact your GP if you experience any of the following symptoms 24 hours from your procedure:

- You have serious stomach pain or cramping.
- You are unable to pass stool or less frequent stool movement for longer than 72 hours.
- You are unable to pass gas.
- You have constant nausea or vomiting.
- You have a temperature of 38°C or higher.

Contact information

Radiology Department:

Tel: 0300 422 6860

Monday to Friday, 9:00am to 5:00pm

We are pleased that we can offer state of the art technology for diagnosis. However, radiology equipment needs constant updating and there is a charitable fund for this.

If you would like to make a donation, please send a cheque to the address below. Cheques should be made payable to GHNHSFT.

The Business Manager
Radiology Department
Gloucestershire Royal Hospital
Great Western Road
Gloucester
GL1 3NN

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Making a choice

Shared Decision Making

If you are asked to make a choice, you may have lots of questions that you want to ask. You may also want to talk over your options with your family or friends. It can help to write a list of the questions you want answered and take it to your appointment.



Ask 3 Questions

To begin with, try to make sure you get the answers to three key questions if you are asked to make a choice about your healthcare.

1. What are my options?
2. What are the pros and cons of each option for me?
3. How do I get support to help me make a decision that is right for me?

These resources have been adapted with kind permission from the MAGIC Programme, supported by the Health Foundation* Ask 3 Questions is based on Shepherd HL, et al. Three questions that patients can ask to improve the quality of information physicians give about treatment options: A cross-over trial. Patient Education and Counselling, 2011;84: 379-85

<https://aqua.nhs.uk/resources/shared-decision-making-case-studies/>