

ANORECTAL PHYSIOLOGY EVALUATION

What is Anorectal Physiology?

Anorectal physiology is the study of the function of the anus and rectum. It is a computer-assisted method whereby muscle strength and pelvic floor motion are evaluated. This evaluation will assist your physician in recommending appropriate medical or surgical treatment to you.

What are tests performed?

There are several different tests utilized in the evaluation of the function of the anus and rectum. You may be scheduled for only one of them or several. Your physician will choose the most appropriate one for your particular medical condition. The test chosen will be explained to you by your physician and there are written explanations included in this packet. If you are still unclear or have questions please contact our clinical staff.

What is anal manometry?

Anal manometry is an evaluation of the strength of the muscles which control bowel movements. The test is performed by placing a small tube (about the size of a drinking straw) into the rectum. Pressure monitors inside the tube measure the muscle strength which is recorded on a computer graph similar to an electrocardiogram (EKG). A measure of rectal sensation will also be obtained. It is a painless procedure which takes about 10 minutes to perform.

What is Pudendal Nerve Study?

Pudendal Nerve study is a test of the nerves that control the bowel function. It is performed using a small sensor placed on the tip of a gloved finger which is then inserted into the rectum. This is similar to a rectal exam. This test is not painful and should only take about 10 minutes.

What is Surface Electromyography?

A surface electromyography (SEMG) tests the electrical activity of an individual muscle or muscle group. It is performed by placing small electrodes externally around the anal opening. This does not hurt and should take only a couple of minutes.

What is a rectal ultrasound?

A rectal ultrasound is a painless procedure designed to evaluate the anal muscle. A short ultrasound probe is inserted into the anus and sound waves are bounced off the muscle giving the doctor a precise anatomic picture of the muscle. This is most commonly ordered for patients with incontinence to locate any sphincter abnormalities or injuries. This takes approximately 10 minutes.

What is Defocography?

Defocography is a test of the function of the rectum and pelvic floor muscles. These muscles control the rectum and anus during evacuation. You will be asked to drink a small amount of barium and in addition a small amount of barium will instilled into the vagina and the rectum. You will then be told to bare down as if attempting to have a bowel movement. An x-ray recording will be made during your attempt. This test is painless and will be conducted by a radiologist and takes approximately 15 minutes.

What is a Dynamic Pelvic Floor MRI?

A Dynamic Pelvic Floor MRI views the pelvic floor, looking for possible dysfunctions which may manifest as stress incontinence, uterine prolapse, constipation and /or incomplete evacuation. No special preparation is required for this test. Once you are positioned on the MRI table, a small, lubricated catheter is inserted into the rectum. A clear gel will be instilled into the rectum. The catheter will then be removed. The tech will then begin to have you push the gel out will scanning it completed. This actual exam time usually takes less than 30 minutes.

When will I know the results?

You will be instructed to schedule an appointment once all of the tests have been completed. The results of the tests will be compiled and your physician will review those and discuss with you at that appointment. This could take approximately 1-2 weeks after all the tests are completed and the results are received.

You will not require a ride and will be able to leave immediately following the completion of the exams.

PREPARATION:

Enema Bowel Prep



1. Purchase 2 adult regular fleet enemas (saline).
2. Take the first fleet enema **3 hours** before leaving for your appointment. Be sure to follow the instructions on the box (*hold for 10 minutes*).

3. Take the second fleet enema **1** hour before leaving for your appointment. Again be sure to follow instructions and hold for 10 minutes.

4. How to use an enema: Remove the protective cap from the pre-lubricated enema tip before using. Gently insert the tip into the rectum with a slight side-to-side movement, with the tip pointing towards the navel. **Do not force the enema tip into the rectum as this can cause injury.** Slowly squeeze the bottle until nearly all the liquid in the bottle is gone. Then remove the tip from the rectum. Maintain your position until a strong urge to defecate is felt. Do not retain the enema solution for more than 10 minutes.

There are no dietary restrictions. Please arrive 15 minutes prior to your scheduled appointment.