

What is a Defecating Proctogram?

This is an x-ray examination of the rectum, the lower 10 - 15 cm of your large bowel, and the way the muscles around this area work. You may be referred for this procedure if you are having problems with faecal incontinence.

It is not painful. However we do understand that it is embarrassing to evacuate your bowels with others present. Because of this we do everything that we can to ensure that you feel as comfortable as possible, you may even bring along your favourite music on CD or MP3 which can be played quietly in the background.

Who is in the room during this procedure?

- A Radiologist - the doctor who performs the test
- 1 or 2 Medical Radiation Technologist/s (MRT)
- A student MRT may assist the MRT during the procedure on occasion

We understand that this is a sensitive procedure so will check with you before the examination that you are comfortable that MRT students are present.

You are welcome to bring a support person along to your appointment, however as this procedure involves the use of X-rays we recommend that they wait in the waiting/ changing room during the procedure.

How do I prepare for this procedure?

It is important that your rectum is empty when we perform this test so you will find a preparation kit with a suppository included in with this letter. Please read the following instructions carefully.

Two hours before your appointment time, insert the suppository into your rectum.

1. Unwrap the suppository
2. Lie on your side and draw your knees up to your chest
3. Gently push the suppository into the rectum, rounded end first, as far as possible

In most cases a bowel evacuation will occur within one hour.

What happens during the procedure?

The MRT will bring you into the changing room and ask you to change into a hospital gown.

Once you have changed the MRT will bring you into the Fluoroscopy (X-ray) room. The Radiologist then will explain the procedure to you and give you the opportunity to ask any further questions.



The Fluoroscopy room

You will be asked to lie on the Fluoroscopy table. In women it may also be necessary to identify the location of other structures in your pelvic region by inserting a small amount of dilute barium into the vagina. The MRT will assist you with this if necessary.

A small tube will then be inserted into your bottom to allow a small quantity of thick barium paste (x-ray dye) to be put into the rectum; this paste has the consistency of mashed potato. Once enough barium is in your rectum the tube will be removed and you will be helped from the table to a seat. The room will be rearranged for the second part of the test.

You will then be helped to a commode and asked to strain and empty your bowel. During this time x-rays will be taken.

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You may feel worried that this is a little undignified but please be reassured that we will do our best to ensure your privacy at all times.

What happens after the procedure?

You will return to the changing room where you may use the toilet. There may still be a small amount of Barium remaining in your rectum. This should pass normally on the toilet. There is also a shower available in the cubicle which you are welcome to use. This space is available for your use as long as required, please take your time and ensure that you feel ready to leave.

What are the risks of this procedure?

A defecating proctogram is generally considered to be a safe test, as barium sulphate is a harmless material.

- It is possible to become a little constipated after this test, drinking plenty of fluids after the test will help prevent this
- All x-ray examinations involve exposure to radiation in varying amounts. The length and level of exposure to radiation from x-rays in medical procedures is strictly controlled and kept to the minimum possible
- As x-rays can be harmful to the unborn child it is a legal requirement to ask all female patients of child bearing age if they are pregnant. All female patients between the ages of 11 and 60 will be asked in private if there is any chance they could be pregnant

How do I find out the results of this procedure?

The radiologist will not be able to provide a result immediately.

They will study the images obtained and will write a formal report and send the results to the doctor that referred you for this test. A copy will also be sent to your GP.

Results are usually available to your doctor within 2 weeks.

Where can I go to find more information?

If you have any further questions contact the radiology admin team using the contact details below and they will arrange for an MRT to call you back.

General

There are no lockable facilities in Radiology. We strongly recommend that any valuables are left at home.

Please be aware that CCDHB does not take responsibility for any loss or damage of personal property belonging to patients whilst on CCDHB premises

Contact us or visit <http://www.healthpoint.co.nz>

(select CCDHB and Radiology)

Contact us

Phone: (04) 806 2193 ask for Fluoroscopy bookings

Hours: 8am-4pm, Monday to Friday

Fax: (04) 806 0301

Email: radiology.admin@ccdhb.org.nz