

# Anorectal Manometry (ARM)

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## What is anorectal manometry?

**Anorectal manometry (ARM)** measures the tone (strength) in your anal sphincter and rectal muscles.

- The **anal sphincter** is made of muscles at the end of the rectum that surround the anus.
- The **rectal muscles** are muscles in your **rectum**, the lower part of your large intestine where your body stores stool (poop).

This test can diagnose problems you may be having with bowel movements. It can measure:

- Resting anal sphincter tone
- Releasing anal sphincter tone
- Squeezing anal sphincter tone
- Muscle coordination
- Expulsion of materials (how well you're able to push stool out of your body)
- Sensation (feeling) in the rectum

**If you are unable to keep your test appointment, please call the Medical Procedures Unit at (734) 936-9250 or toll-free at (877) 758-2626.**

## What supplies do I need?

You will need to buy 2 Fleet® enemas (you can find these at any pharmacy).

## How do I prepare for my anorectal manometry?

90 minutes before you leave home to go to your anorectal manometry

appointment, you will need to complete 2 Fleet® enemas. Each enema usually takes 15 minutes to work, and both enemas together may take up to 1 hour.

- Follow the instructions provided on the box of Fleet® enemas as needed.

#### **Instructions for doing your enemas:**

1. Lie down on your left side, with your knees bent up toward your chest.
2. Remove the cap from the tip of the enema bottle.
3. Gently insert the enema tip about 3-4 inches into your rectum.
4. Open the clamp on the tubing and allow the water to flow slowly into your rectum. You can adjust how fast the water is flowing by moving the clamp.
5. Hold the water in your rectum as long as possible (at least 15 minutes), then expel it (let it out) into the toilet.
6. Complete the second enema after you have expelled the water from the first one.

#### **What can I expect during my anorectal manometry appointment?**

You will have this test in the GI Physiology Laboratory in the Medical Procedures Unit. The appointment may take up to 1 hour.

- We will ask you to undress from the waist down and put on a gown with an opening in the back.
- A trained technologist will explain everything that will happen during the test. They will ask you to lie on an exam table, turn onto your left side, and bend your knees. Then they will insert a small catheter (flexible tube) with a small balloon at the end into the rectum.
- Staff will inflate the balloon and take measurements while asking you to squeeze and relax your muscles.
- At the end, they will ask you to expel (push out) the balloon into the toilet.

## **What are the benefits, risks, and alternatives for anorectal manometry?**

Before starting the procedure, a member of our team will ask you to sign a consent form. By signing this form, you are agreeing that we have given you information and you understand the procedure, its benefits and risks, and the alternatives (other options) for an anorectal manometry. Read this handout or view the video at [bit.ly/MM-ARM](https://bit.ly/MM-ARM) to understand your informed consent.

### **What are the benefits of anorectal manometry?**

Anorectal manometry is a very safe and painless test that checks the function of your anus and rectum. The test will help provide helpful information to your doctor in treating conditions such as constipation and fecal incontinence (leaking stool).

### **What are the risks of anorectal manometry?**

The risks of anorectal manometry may include:

- Discomfort
- Bleeding: You may have some bleeding from your rectum after the test. If you have more than a few tablespoons of blood, or if the bleeding does not stop, please contact your doctor.
- Perforation: A **perforation** is a tear in the wall of the rectum. This is very rare. Make sure that the provider who ordered the anorectal manometry test for you knows if you have had any pelvic surgery in the past, as this can increase your risk of perforation.

### **What are the alternatives for anorectal manometry?**

Currently, there are no alternatives for this test.

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