

## What is a Contrast Enema?

Your child's doctor ordered a radiology test called a contrast enema to look at your child's colon (also called the "large intestine"). The colon is the last part of the bowel that helps store and get rid of waste in the form of stool or feces. This test is sometimes called a "barium enema". Barium is one type of contrast, or dye, which can be used for the study. Depending on your child's history, the radiologist may use barium or may use a different kind of contrast. A contrast enema is performed in the radiology department using fluoroscopy, which is a type of real-time x-ray (like a video x-ray). The test does use radiation to get the pictures. The amount of radiation used is very small. The radiology Department at C.S. Mott Children's Hospital uses special techniques and equipment in order to decrease the dose of radiation to the minimum amount needed to perform the study. To learn more about this, visit the Image Gently website: <http://www.imagegently.org/>

A **radiologist** is a medical doctor who specializes in the reading and interpretation of X-rays and other medical images.

## How will I prepare my child for the test at home?

Most children do not have to fast (not eat) or do any special preparation for the examination. We will call you the day before with specific instructions.

All girls ages 10-17 must take a pregnancy test is before x-rays can be taken. Your doctor can order a pregnancy test ahead of time, or it could be done in the radiology department the day of the test.

## How is the contrast-enema test performed?

The test takes place in the radiology room (called a "Fluoroscopy room"). One parent or a caregiver is allowed to be in the room with the child for the entire time. Other family members will wait in the waiting room. The X-ray

technologist will show you where you can stand during the test. Please follow the directions carefully so that everyone stays safe during the contrast enema. If you are assisting your child at the bedside you will be asked to wear a lead apron. Parents who are pregnant or think they are pregnant will not be allowed in the room.

If your child is older, they will put on a hospital gown for the test. If your child is still a baby, their diaper will need to be removed.

- Your child will lie on a special table (called a “Fluoroscopy table”). There will be a camera above them. The radiologist will move the camera to take the pictures. Sometimes younger children (under 2 years old) may be secured to a special padded platform in order to keep them safe. This will also help your child keep still so the radiologist can get better pictures.
- Once your child is in the correct position on the fluoroscopy table, a small tube (or catheter) will be inserted into their rectum by either the radiology technologist (radiology helper) or by the radiology doctor. The tube is inserted only 2-3 inches into your child’s bottom. The tube may be secured in place with a tape on the skin of your child’s bottom.
- The radiologist will use this tube to fill your child’s colon with contrast (or dye) while taking pictures. In order to get the appropriate pictures, your child may have to roll onto their side or move around. The radiologist and technologist will give specific instructions and help your child move. If you choose to stay in the room for the test, you will also be able to talk to your child and help them move.
- At the end of the test, the contrast (or dye) will be drained back out using the same tube that was used to put it in. (in most case). The radiologist may choose to get 1-2 more pictures even after the contrast has been drained out.
- After all of the pictures have been taken, the tube will be removed from your child’s bottom. At this point, your child will be allowed to go to the bathroom if they need to, or you can put a diaper back on your child.

## **What is the parent's role during the test?**

You will be allowed to remain in the room with your child throughout the study. As the parent, you can be a great source of support for your child. Talking to your child during the study will help him/her feel comfortable and relaxed. We encourage you to ask questions both before and after the study. If you have questions during the study, it is helpful if you can save them until after the study is finished

## **How will I care for my child after the test?**

It is important to make sure your child drinks lots of water for the rest of the day. Depending on the type of contrast that was used, your child may have some minor diarrhea the rest of the day. Sometimes you or your child may notice that your child's poop is white for 1-2 days. This is normal. It is just the remaining contrast coming out.

Please make arrangements with the ordering physician to get the results of your child's test.

## **I have more questions about Contrast Enema. Who can I call?**

Pediatric Radiology Nurse (734) 936- 7907.

Child Life Specialist (734) 232- 6744

We are available Monday-Friday between 8am-4pm.

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