

Barium exam: Care at home

What can I expect after a barium exam?

During the exam, a type of contrast fluid called barium (**bare-ee-um**) is put into a part of the body so it can be seen on the X-rays. There should be no reaction to the barium. How your child feels afterwards depends on how the barium was given.

- Children who receive the barium by mouth feel full afterwards. Even though the barium has no calories or nutritional value, it will replace a regular feeding.
- Children who receive the barium by rectum may feel the urge to have bowel movements for a few hours.

Most children who have regular bowel movements do not have a problem passing the barium. There will be white barium mixed with the stool. The color of the stool should return to normal in less than 3 days.

How should I care for my child?

Your child may return to normal activities including eating and drinking. Give extra fluids to help the barium pass more easily.

Watch for trouble passing the barium. If needed, your doctor can prescribe medicine to help clean out the bowel.

What else do I need to know?

A report will be sent to the doctor who ordered the test a few days after the exam. You should receive a call from the clinic within a week about the results and follow-up instructions.

When should I call the clinic?

- cramping
- trouble having bowel movements
- if you have not received the results within 5 working days after the test
- any other problems or concerns

Questions?

This sheet is not specific to your child but provides general information. If you have any questions, please call your clinic.

For more reading material about this and other health topics, please call or visit the Family Resource Center library, or visit our Web site: www.childrensmn.org.

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