1. WHAT IS AN ANTEGRADE SMALL BOWEL ENEMA?

An antegrade small bowel enema is a special x-ray examination of the small bowel.

When a disease is suspected to involve this area, a Small Bowel Follow-Through or Antegrade Small Bowel Enema using barium sulfate (a contrast media) are two procedures available to help diagnose the problem.

Some of the common symptoms that indicate small bowel disease include abdominal pain or discomfort, anemia, diarrhea, abdominal distention and weight loss.

2. DO I NEED TO FOLLOW ANY SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS TO BE READY FOR AN ANTEGRADE SMALL BOWEL ENEMA?

If there is a possibility that you are pregnant, please inform your physician before the procedure, as the procedure may have to be postponed or cancelled.

You may have a clear liquid breakfast, then nothing to eat or drink until after the procedure.

If you are unable to keep your appointment, please let us know as soon as possible. Should you be admitted to hospital, please inform your physician about your appointment.

If you have had an ultrasound on your abdomen elsewhere, please inform the technologist at the time of the procedure.

3. WHO WILL PERFORM THE PROCEDURE?

This procedure will be performed by a radiologist (a specialist medical doctor). An x-ray technologist will assist.

4. WHAT HAPPENS TO ME DURING THE PROCEDURE?

You will need to change into a hospital gown before either procedure. Once in the x-ray room, the procedure will be explained to you by the technologist and she/he will remain with you to provide further support and assistance. Please inform the technologist if you have any allergies or if you are diabetic.

The radiologist will insert a small, flexible tube into your nose, down to your small bowel. Some surface freezing and lubricant will be used in your nose to make this easier for you.

The barium (a thick liquid that shows up white on x-ray images) will be run through the tube followed by 500-1500 ml of cold water or methyl cellulose (a clear liquid the consistency of Jello).

In order to better see a particular section of bowel, sometimes a muscle relaxant (Buscopan) may be injected into a vein in your arm. If required, this will be explained to you. If you have glaucoma (an eye disease), please inform the radiologist.

The Radiologist will take images as the barium passes through the small bowel until it reaches the large bowel.

This procedure may take about an hour.
5. SHOULD I EXPECT ANY AFTER EFFECTS AS A RESULT OF THIS PROCEDURE?

If you receive an injection of Buscopan (a muscle relaxant), you may feel thirsty.
Rarely, double or blurred vision may occur for a short time following the injection.
If visual problems occur, tell the technologist and do not drive until your vision clears.
You may also experience some gas cramps as the effects of the muscle relaxant subside. This will improve with time.

If the cramps continue causing significant discomfort, please seek medical attention.

If you cannot get in touch with your own doctor, go to the Emergency Department of the hospital nearest you.

Resume your normal diet. You will have watery, white stools for a period of time until the methyl cellulose and barium have left your digestive system.
You are encouraged to increase your fluids (water, juice) for the next two days.
You are also encouraged to increase the roughage in your diet. This will help the barium pass through the bowel more quickly.
If you are on a fluid restricted diet, or roughage restricted diet, please discuss the change in diet with your physician.

6. WHEN AND HOW WILL I KNOW THE RESULTS?

Your physician will receive a written report from the radiologist. You should obtain the results from your own physician. If there is any urgency, your physician is more than welcome to contact us by telephone.

If you have any other questions or concerns that have not been answered here, please feel free to ask our staff. We are here for YOU - patient care is our number one priority!