1. **WHAT IS A DOUBLE CONTRAST BARIUM ENEMA?**

   A double contrast barium enema is a special x-ray examination of your colon (large bowel) after the introduction of barium sulfate (a contrast media) and air.

   When a disease is suspected to involve the colon, a barium enema is one of the procedures available to help diagnose the problem.

   Some of the common symptoms of colonic diseases are abdominal pain or discomfort, anemia, weight loss, diarrhea and constipation.

   The procedure is also performed on patients having no symptoms but a strong family history of colonic diseases.

2. **DO I NEED TO FOLLOW ANY SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS TO BE READY FOR A BARIUM 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.

   If you are diabetic, please inform the Booking department when you are booked so you can be given an earlier appointment.

   To ensure good x-ray pictures of the colon (large bowel), the bowel must be empty.

   Please follow the instructions on the prep sheet.

   You may continue to take your routine oral medication with a small sip of water.

   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 a recent diagnostic test of your abdomen elsewhere, please inform the technologist before the procedure.

3. **WHO WILL PERFORM THE PROCEDURE?**

   The 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 for this procedure. Once in the x-ray room, the x-ray technologist will explain the procedure to you. If you have any allergies, please let us know.

   The technologist will then insert a small lubricated tube into your rectum (anus). A small balloon on the tip of the tubing will be inflated. This will help you retain the barium. The tube will be used for the delivery of barium sulfate (a thick liquid that shows up white on x-ray pictures) and air into your bowel.

   A muscle relaxant (Buscopan) to help keep cramping to a minimum, may be injected by the radiologist. If you have glaucoma (an eye disease), please inform the radiologist.
Once the flow of barium has started, you may experience a feeling of discomfort or urgency in your rectum. This will gradually subside. The radiologist will direct you into the necessary positions. X-ray pictures will be taken by the radiologist. Once the procedure is finished, the tube will be removed and you will be allowed to go to the washroom. You are advised to wait about 15 minutes to ensure most of the barium and air have been expelled. At this time you are free to leave the department.

The technologist will be available at all times to answer your questions, offer support and assist you as necessary. In total, the procedure can be expected to take up to about 30 minutes.

5. **SHOULD I EXPECT ANY AFTER EFFECTS AS A RESULT OF THIS PROCEDURE?**

If you receive an injection of Buscopan (muscle relaxant), you may feel thirsty. Rarely, double or blurred vision may occur for a short time following the procedure. 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 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!