

Barium Swallow

A barium swallow is an x-ray that checks for problems in your throat, esophagus, stomach and small intestine. You drink a white chalky liquid called barium to get pictures on x-rays.

If you are breastfeeding, pregnant, or think you might be, tell the staff before the x-ray is taken.

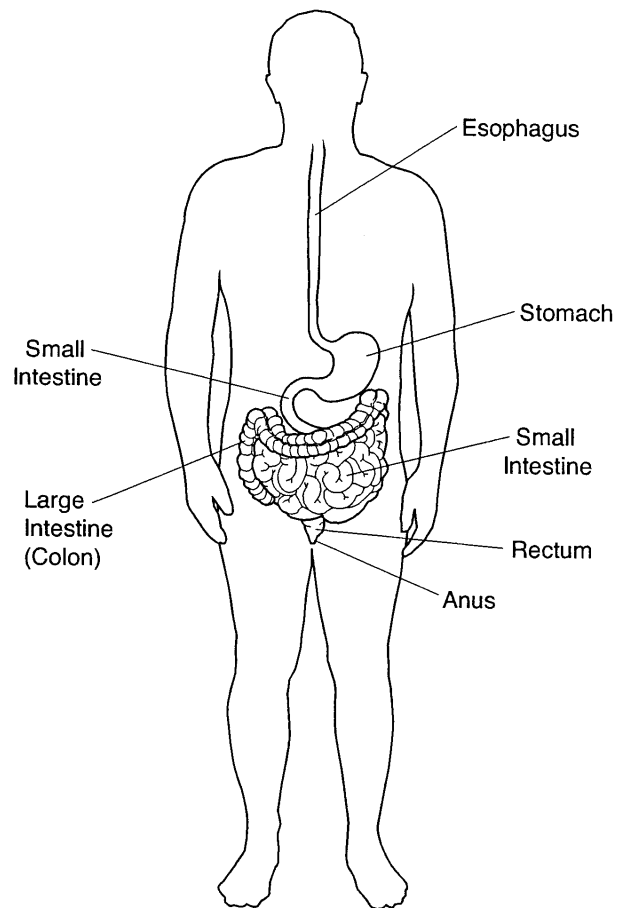
Arrive on time for your test. The test takes about 15-45 minutes. You may need to stay for up to 6 hours for more x-rays if your small intestine is being looked at.

To Prepare

- Do not eat or drink anything, including water, after midnight before the test.
- Do not smoke after midnight before the test.
- If you need to take your medicines the morning of the test, take them with sips of water only.

During the Test

- You will wear a hospital gown.
- You are given 1 or 2 barium drinks. The drink tastes chalky and may be flavored.
- X-rays are taken as the barium flows down your esophagus into your stomach. You may need to stand or lie on a table for the x-rays. The table is moved in many positions. As you move, the barium coats the inside of your stomach and intestines. More x-rays are taken as the barium moves through your body.



- If you are to have x-rays of your small intestine, it may take up to 6 hours to complete your test.

After the Test

- Your stool will be light colored for 2-3 days after the test.
- Drink 6-8 glasses of liquids after the test. This will help remove the barium from your body and keep you from being constipated.
- Test results are sent to your doctor. Your doctor will share the results with you.

Call your doctor if you have:

- Barium in your stool 3 days after the test
- A thin stool or notice a change in your bowel habits
- Stool that is not normal in 3 days
- Pain in your lower abdomen or stomach

Call your doctor **right away** if you:

- Cannot stop vomiting
- See blood when you vomit or have blood in your stool

Talk to your doctor or nurse if you have any questions or concerns.