

Small Bowel Study

You are scheduled to have a small bowel study on: _____ at: _____ am/pm.

UW Hospital
600 Highland Ave
Take the Atrium elevators to 3rd floor
Check in at the G3/3 reception desk

1 S. Park Medical Center
1 S. Park St.
Madison, WI 53715

UW Health Digestive Center
750 University Row
Madison, WI 53705

What is a small bowel study?

A small bowel study is an x-ray of the small bowel. The contrast used for this test is dense and can be seen clearly on x-ray.

How do I get ready for this test?

Your doctor's office will schedule your exam. Two days before the test, we will call you to tell you when and where to arrive for your test. Please ask your doctor if you should take your normal medicines before this exam.

How do I prepare the day before the test?

Do not eat or drink after midnight unless your doctor has told you to take pills with a sip of water.

What happens the day of the test?

On the day of the exam, check in at the reception desk or kiosk. When the tech takes you to the dressing room, they will give you a robe and gown to put on.

We will ask you to lay on the x-ray table and drink contrast. The doctor will monitor the test on the TV-like screen and will take pictures throughout the test. The lights will be dim so the doctor can clearly see the screen. The whirring noise you hear is made by the x-ray machine. The study takes about two hours, but the exam may last up to 8

hours depending on how fast the contrast passes through your small intestines.

What happens after the test?

The radiologist will review the images and write a report about the results by the end of the day. The radiologist will talk with the provider who ordered the test about the results. Your doctor will talk over the test results with you and make plans for further treatment, if needed.

Your stools will be white for a day or two. This is normal. This is the contrast passing out of your bowel. Contrast can cause constipation, so drink extra fluids to help move the contrast out. Ask your doctor if you need to take 2 Tbsp of Milk of Magnesia[®] to help you expel the contrast.

Resume your normal diet unless told otherwise by your doctor.

When to Call

Call if you have any questions or concerns about your test or need to cancel or reschedule.

Who to Call

Radiology Scheduling
608-263-9729, press 2

Your health care team may have given you this information as part of your care. If so, please use it and call if you have any questions. If this information was not given to you as part of your care, please check with your doctor. This is not medical advice. This is not to be used for diagnosis or treatment of any medical condition. Because each person's health needs are different, you should talk with your doctor or others on your health care team when using this information. If you have an emergency, please call 911. Copyright © 12/2022 University of Wisconsin Hospitals and Clinics Authority. All rights reserved. Produced by the Department of Nursing. HF#5159