

Anorectal Manometry

Anorectal manometry is a test that measures the strength and tone of your anal sphincter. A strong anal sphincter allows you to control your bowel movements. The test can measure sensation within the rectum.

Getting Ready

Give yourself 1-2 phosphate/saline enema(s) 2-3 hours before your visit to clean any solid stool from your rectum. You do not need to be clear of all stool. You can purchase phosphate/saline enemas (such as Fleets®) from your local drugstore. If you need another option, please contact DHC motility staff.

You can eat and drink normally prior to your appointment.

How to Give the Enema

Lay a towel on the bed to protect it. Lie on your left side, knees bent. Gently insert the lubricated enema tip into your anal canal. It may go in easier if you bear down, like you are having a bowel movement. This helps relax the muscles. Squeeze the enema bottle to get the liquid into your rectum. Gently remove enema tip from your body. Hold the liquid in. After 3-5 minutes, use the bathroom to let out the liquid. It is normal to have mild cramping or burning. It will go away with rest.

Day of Test

Your visit will last about 30-45 minutes.

Do not take diltiazem cream (Cardizem) the day of the test.

During this test, a thin, flexible catheter with a balloon on the end is inserted into the anal canal and rectum. The catheter is attached to a machine that measures pressure. You will be asked to squeeze and push your sphincter muscles during the test. It should feel a lot like having a bowel movement.

Your doctor may request more tests after the manometry exam is complete. This may include balloon expulsion.

Balloon Expulsion Test

This test assesses rectal emptying. A small balloon is inserted into the rectum and filled with water. You will need to expel the small balloon from the rectum while seated. The amount of time it takes to expel the balloon is recorded.

Follow Up

You will follow up with your doctor as planned after testing. Please allow 1-2 weeks for all reports to be given to your doctor.

Who to Call

UW Health Digestive Health Center
750 University Row
Madison, WI
(608) 890-5010
Toll-free (855) 342-9900

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 © 11/2022 University of Wisconsin Hospitals and Clinics Authority. All rights reserved. Produced by the Department of Nursing. HF#7484