Colon Transit Study (Sitzmark Study)

What is a colon transit study?

Your doctor has suggested you have a colon transit study (sitzmark study) as part of the evaluation at National Jewish Health. A colon transit study is a diagnostic test that will allow your doctor to evaluate the function of your colon. The colon is the lower portion of the GI tract and is about 5 feet long. The colon transports food from your small intestine to your rectum. This study can help your doctor determine a diagnosis and the best treatment for you.

How do you get ready for the test?

Planning ahead:

- Purchase the supply of Sitzmark capsules you will be taking for the study. You will get a prescription for the capsules. You can get these at the National Jewish Health pharmacy.
- You will not be able to take a laxative during the days you are doing the test. There is no bowel preparation/colon cleansing before this exam.
- You can take a fiber supplement product containing psyllium such as Metamucil or Benefiber.

Begin the test when you have a bowel movement:

- Take the first Sitzmark capsule on day 1 day at 9 a.m. or at the same time you eat breakfast. Day 1 will be on a Tuesday or Friday.
- You will take 1 Sitzmark capsule day 2 and day 3 at 9 a.m. (or at the same time you took the capsule on day 1).
- On the fourth day after you start taking the capsules you will have an abdominal x-ray at about the same time you have been taking the capsules.
- You may need to come back for an abdominal x-ray on the seventh day after you start taking the capsules. You will be informed after the x-ray on the fourth day.

What is done during the test?

The colon transit study will take 4 or 7 days to complete. You will take 1 Sitzmark capsule every day for 3 days. On the fourth day you will come to National Jewish Health for an x-ray of your abdomen.

The x-ray of your abdomen does not hurt. The radiology technologist will explain the x-ray to you before you start. Ask questions if you don’t understand. You may need to come back on the seventh day for another abdominal x-ray.
Let the technologist know if you are pregnant or nursing.

The doctor will review the test results and discuss them with you at a later date.

**Remember to schedule the abdominal x-ray for the colon transit study 4 and 7 days after you take the first capsule.**

**How long will the test take?**

The entire Colon Transit Study takes 4 or 7 days after you take the first capsule. When you come to National Jewish Health the abdominal X-ray will take about 30 minutes.

**How do you get to your test?**

If you are being seen at National Jewish Health, on the day of your scheduled test, check in at the Front Desk. If you have questions please call 303-398-1355.

Visit our website for more information about support groups, clinical trials and lifestyle information.

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**NOTE:** This information is provided to you as an educational service of National Jewish Health. It is not meant to be a substitute for consulting with your own physician.

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