

TESTfacts

An Educational Health Series From National Jewish Health®



Small Bowel Follow Through (SBFT)

What is a Small Bowel Follow through?

Your doctor has suggested you have a Small Bowel Follow Through of your small intestine. This is sometimes called a Small Bowel Series. This will help your doctor identify possible problems and the best treatment.

This study involves the drinking of barium which will be about two cups. The barium will show your small intestines on the x-ray. A series of x-rays will be taken over time to follow the path of the barium through your small intestine.

How do you get ready for the test?

- ✓ **Adults - Do not eat or drink for 8 hours prior to procedure.** This means nothing by mouth for 8 hours. Take medications at the regular times with a small sip of water.
- ✓ **Children - Do not eat or drink for 8 hours prior to procedure.** This means nothing by mouth for 8 hours. Take medications at the regular times with a small sip of water.
- ✓ **Infants and Young Children - (two years or younger) Do not eat or drink 4 hours prior to procedure.** Give medications at the regular times with a small amount of water.
- ✓ You will be asked to put on a hospital gown and pants.
- ✓ Let the technologist know if you are pregnant.

What happens during a Small Bowel Follow Through?

The technologist will ask you drink about two cups of barium. Immediately following this, the technologist will start taking a series of x-rays of your abdomen and pelvis around 20 minutes apart. In between the x-rays, you will be asked to take a seat in the Patient Waiting Area. Once it is determined the barium has reached your large intestine, a Radiologist or Radiologist Practitioner Assistant

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will take a few fluoroscopic views of the junction of your small and large intestine. The length of time required for the barium to travel through the small intestine varies.

What Does Barium Taste Like?

Barium comes in several different consistencies and is artificially sweetened and flavored.

What should you do after the test?

Barium rarely causes any problems. It passes through the digestive system. Drink extra fluids for 12 to 24 hours after the study. If your/your child becomes constipated after the study, drink more liquids. If the constipation continues, talk with your doctor.

How long will the test take?

The Small Bowel Follow Through can take about 1 hour to 3 hours, and occasionally longer. Be prepared to remain in the Radiology Department for several hours.

How do you get to your test?

Your appointment is in the Institute for Advanced Biomedical Imaging (Radiology). You will be directed where to go when you check-in. If you have any questions you can contact The Institute for Advanced Biomedical Imaging (Radiology at 303-398-1611.)