

Barium Swallow (Barium Esophagram)

Barium studies, (also called as contrast studies) involve use of a thick, white chalky liquid agent Barium, that when swallowed provide an image on X-Ray of the inside of the intestine in relation to the wall of the organ and surrounding structures. A barium swallow, or barium esophagram may be ordered for patients to determine the cause of difficult or painful swallowing, coughing, choking, a sensation of something stuck in the throat, or chest pain. The patient is asked to drink the thick white chalky substance and serial X-Ray images are taken or a video is made. Sometimes the doctor may ask a patient to swallow a barium tablet if the patient has trouble swallowing. This helps the doctor to detect any subtle narrowing of the esophagus.

What to Expect During Test

There is no preparation required for the exam. The patient will be given a cup of barium to drink while the radiologist watches and evaluates the swallowing process using fluoroscopy. As the barium coats the lining of the esophagus, images are taken to track the pathway to the stomach. The patient may be placed in various positions during the exam. The test lasts about 10 minutes and the patient is able to resume normal activity after the test.

Please be sure to drink plenty of fluids after the test to eliminate barium.

IMPORTANT DISCLAIMER

This information is intended to provide general guidance only and is not a definitive medical advice. You MUST consult one of our expert doctors regarding your condition, procedure and prep for the procedure for a definitive opinion. Please call and make an appointment at (914)683-1555