

Anorectal Manometry Test (ARM) Instructions

Thank you for choosing Duke Gastroenterology (GI) for your healthcare needs. You are scheduled for an anorectal manometry test (ARM). Please review this information to prepare for your test. Anorectal Manometry is a non-invasive test to diagnose reasons for constipation, fecal incontinence, or problems with bowel movements. ARM tests the pressures and functions of your rectal sphincter muscles that help you control your bowel movements.

For this test, you must clean out your rectum (lower portion of your colon) with two enemas. There is no sedation for this test. You can drive yourself to and from your appointment. Since children are discouraged in patient care areas, please make childcare arrangements. Call Duke Gastroenterology at (919) 684-6437 if you have questions about your test.

How Is the Test Performed?

There are two parts to this test. During both parts of the test, the nurse will be with you to perform the test and record the results. The nurse will send your results to your referring provider within two (2) weeks.

Part One: You will lay on your left side on an exam bed with your knees slightly bent. The nurse will insert a small tube (catheter) with a balloon attached to the end into your rectum. The nurse will reposition the tube throughout the test. The nurse will ask you to squeeze your rectal muscles (like holding in a bowel movement) followed by bearing down (like trying to have a bowel movement). The nurse will inflate and deflate the balloon a few times and ask what you feel. The nurse removes the tube at the end of the test.

Part Two: The nurse will insert a new tube with a balloon into your rectum. This balloon is inflated with water or air. You will sit on a toilet and attempt to push the balloon out, like having a bowel movement. If you cannot push the balloon out, the nurse will deflate and remove the balloon.

Test Preparation

One Week Before Your Test

- ☐ Purchase two (2) Saline Enemas. You can buy saline enemas over the counter at most grocery stores or pharmacies.

The Day of Your Test

Two (2) hours before your appointment

- ☐ STOP eating all food and drinking fluids.
- ☐ Complete two (2) Saline Enemas. Review the package instructions.
- ☐ Administer the first saline enema by inserting the pre-lubricated tip of the enema in your rectum.
- ☐ Squeeze the contents of the enema into your rectum and hold the fluid for 15 minutes.
- ☐ Sit on the toilet, push out the water, and try to have a bowel movement.
- ☐ Immediately repeat these steps with the second saline enema.
- ☐ Medicines: Continue taking all your medicines, including aspirin and blood thinners.

