

## **BARIUM MEAL**

A barium meal, which studies the upper digestive system, is a diagnostic test used to detect abnormalities of the esophagus, stomach and duodenum using X-ray imaging.

The procedure consists of opacifying the targeted region with a contrast agent (barium), which is administered orally. The barium will progress through the upper digestive system by lining its walls, which in turn will be visible on the X-ray images.

The procedure, lasting for approximately 10 minutes, helps detect abnormalities such as ulcers, tumors and inflammation.

### Preparation

You will need to fast from 9pm the night before the barium meal; this also includes drinking, chewing gum and smoking.

### Medical contraindication

Pregnancy is a contraindication of this procedure.

If you have any allergies, please notify one of our members of staff.

### The barium meal procedure (step by step)

- Our team will accompany you into the examination room and thusly direct you to stand in front of the X-ray machine.
- The technician will provide you with a liquid (barium), which you must drink. You will also need to swallow baking soda crystals, which will create gas in your stomach.
- In order to follow the progression of the barium in the esophagus and the stomach in real time, our specialist will take several X-ray images in different positions.

### The immediate effect of the procedure

The barium meal is not painful. However, the baking soda crystals will cause a slight inconvenience: you will feel the need to burp due to the air the crystals will have created inside your stomach.

### After the procedure

You must drink plenty of water during the following 24 hours to facilitate the removal of the barium from your system.

Your stools may be whitish for 48 to 72 hours after the procedure.

Your results will be sent to your attending physician, who will follow up if necessary.