

## **DOUBLE-CONTRAST BARIUM ENEMA**

A double-contrast barium enema ('DCBE') is a radiological procedure which allows the study of the rectum and the colon (large intestine). It involves the injection of barium (an opaque contrast agent) into the rectum and colon via a small cannula inserted into the anus. Then, X-rays of the abdomen are taken.

This procedure, lasting for approximately 30 minutes, can detect abnormalities such as tumors, polyps, diverticula and inflammation.

### Preparation

The detailed preparation is attached herein and can also be found on our website ([www.sorad.ca/en/preparing-for-exams/](http://www.sorad.ca/en/preparing-for-exams/)). This preparation makes it possible to empty the contents of the intestines in their entirety and it is very important to follow the instructions as provided. If the preparation is inadequately followed, we will not be able to perform the procedure.

### Medical contraindication

Pregnancy is a contraindication of this procedure.

If you have had a colonoscopy, you must wait 15 days before proceeding with the exam. If you are in treatment for diverticulitis, you must wait a month before proceeding with the exam.

### The DCBE procedure (step by step)

- Our team will take care of you and place you on the examination table lying on your left side. This position will facilitate the introduction into your rectum of a cannula connected to a bag containing the contrast agent.
- The technician will inflate a small balloon inside your rectum which will allow the cannula to stay in place throughout the procedure.
- Subsequently, the cannula will release the barium inside the colon, to which air is also added for a double-contrast examination.
- The technician (or the radiologist) will ask you to position yourself in various ways, either lying down or standing, in order to take a series of X-rays.

### The immediate effects of the procedure

Contrary to general belief, a DCBE is usually not painful (although it is uncomfortable). That being said, it is very important that you inform us immediately of any sensation of weakness or dizziness so as to avoid any risk of falling while you are standing.

### After the procedure

In the course of the few days following the procedure, you should drink plenty of water to facilitate the removal of barium from your system.

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

The complications associated with a DCBE are rare because it is minimally invasive.

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