

Barium Swallow

Your doctor has requested a procedure called a Barium Swallow. This exam is performed to assess frequent heartburn (pain), gastric reflux (food/acid comes back up), aspiration (food and/or fluid in your wind pipe), difficulty eating, drinking, or swallowing. At Cedars-Sinai we have a team of physicians, nurses and technicians who specialize in these procedures, and who are led by John Bray, M.D., our chief of gastrointestinal radiology.

Before your exam:

- For a satisfactory exam, your stomach must be empty. It is important that you not eat or drink anything from midnight prior to your exam.
- Additionally, do not use gum, mints or cigarettes the morning of your exam.
- We want to make your waiting time as pleasant as possible. Consider bringing your favorite magazine, book or music player to help you pass the time.
- Please leave your jewelry and valuables at home.

During your exam:

- The technologist will explain your procedure and answer any questions you may have prior to your exam.
- You will be asked to change into a gown.
- Your exam will be performed on a tilting table that will allow the procedure to be performed with you standing and lying down.
- You will stand for the first portion of your study and will drink a cup of liquid (barium).
- The imaging physician will watch the flow of the liquid with a fluoroscope (an x-ray unit combined with a television screen). The liquid will move from your mouth to your stomach.
- The imaging physician will ask you to turn in different positions while taking pictures.
- For the second portion of your procedure you will lie on the exam table, on your stomach and drink more liquid.
- The imaging physician will take additional pictures in this position.
- After the imaging physician has completed the initial imaging, the technologist will take an additional series of x-rays.
- Your procedure will take approximately 60 minutes. (over)

After your exam:

- Drink plenty of liquid for 24-48 hours.
- The barium may make your stool white for several days.
- If you experience constipation, your physician may recommend a mild laxative.
- Your study will be read by the imaging physician and results sent to your physician, usually within 48 hours. Your physician will discuss these results with you and explain what they mean in relation to your health.
- To request copies of your pictures on a PC and MAC compatible CD, or a copy of your report, call (310) 423-8000 and follow the prompts for your selection.

Parking at the Cedars-Sinai Medical Center:

- Taper Imaging Center parking is located in **Lot 7** at the **corner of San Vicente Blvd. & Gracie Allen Dr.** (Alden Dr.). Enter off Sherbourne Drive.
- Parking is partially validated and validation is available in the imaging center lobby.
- Or, park in the Medical Center North Tower off George Burns Road.
- There is a large metal sculpture in the shape of the number "8" in front of the S. Mark Taper Foundation Imaging Center.
- There is a curbside patient drop-off zone on Gracie Allen Dr.