

# Your Anorectal Manometry Study

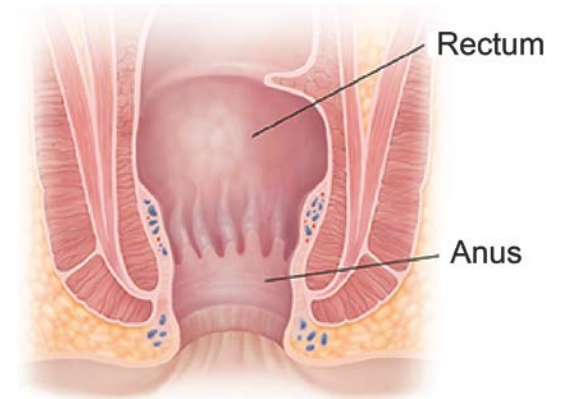
## *How to prepare and what to expect*

*This handout explains an anorectal manometry study. The study is done to find out how well the muscles of your anus and rectum are working. This handout includes how to prepare for the test, what to expect, and how to get your results.*

### What is an anorectal manometry study?

An *anorectal manometry* (ARM) study is done to find out the causes for constipation or stool leakage (*fecal incontinence*) and for other problems of the anus and rectum. An ARM study measures:

- The strength of the muscles in your anus and rectum
- How much feeling you have in your rectum
- How well your *neural reflexes* work (these are needed to have a bowel movement)



### How is it done?

An ARM study uses a small probe that contains pressure sensors. The probe is more narrow and a bit longer than your little finger. It has an empty balloon on the tip. The probe is connected to a computer and records the pressure and strength of your anal and rectal muscles.

*An ARM study finds out how well your anus and rectum are working.*

The probe is first covered with a lubricating gel. It is then moved through your anus and into your rectum. The probe is in place for the first 2 parts of the study, which usually take about 15 to 20 minutes.

The study has 3 parts:

- **Part 1:** You will do different *maneuvers*, such as squeezing or pushing out with (relaxing) your anal muscles. Each maneuver will last about 20 seconds, for a total of 5 to 6 maneuvers.
- **Part 2:** You will rest and relax while lying on your side. The balloon tip of the probe will be filled with air while it is in your rectum. We will ask you to tell us what you feel as the balloon fills.

- **Part 3:** We will first remove the probe from your rectum. We will then place a *catheter* (a thin, flexible tube) with a balloon on the tip into your rectum. The balloon will be filled with a small amount of water. The nurse will help you get to a commode and will then leave the room. You will try to push the balloon out of your rectum, as if you were pushing out a bowel movement. This last part of the test takes just a few minutes.

The entire study will take about 30 minutes.

### **Are any latex products used for the study?**

We do not use any products made with latex for this study.

### **What will I feel during the study?**

You should not have any pain or discomfort during the study.

### **How do I prepare?**

- You will need to buy a saline laxative called a Fleet Enema. You can find this product at most drugstores and many grocery stores.
- About 2 hours before your appointment, give yourself an enema. If no stool passes, give yourself a 2nd enema.
- Avoid eating for 2 hours before the study.

### **What happens after the study?**

- After the study, you can eat and drink as usual, drive your car, and do your normal activities.
- The provider who ordered this test for you will talk with you about the results. Together, you will decide on any care plan that may be needed.

## **Questions?**

Your questions are important. Call your doctor or healthcare provider if you have questions or concerns.

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