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Anorectal Manometry

For evaluation of chronic
constipation and accidental bowel
leakage





What is anorectal manometry?

Anorectal manometry is a test used to evaluate problems with defecation (moving your bowels). People who suffer from constipation or accidental leakage of stool may be asked to have this test. This test will help your doctors better understand why you are having bowel movement issues, which allows them to provide the proper therapy to treat your problems. Specifically, this test measures:

- The pressures of the anal sphincter muscles
- The pressures of the rectal muscles
- Muscle coordination
- The sensation in the rectum
- The nerve reflexes that are needed for normal bowel movements.

How it works

A trained operator will perform this test after explaining the procedure to you.

You will be asked to undress from the waist down and to put on a gown with the opening in the back. You will lie on your left side with your hips and your knees flexed. Since you will need to squeeze and relax during the procedure you will not be sedated.

A small, well-lubricated catheter no thicker than a human finger will be inserted into your rectum. The catheter is connected to a monitor that measures the pressures of several muscles. During the study a small balloon at the tip of the catheter will be inflated to assess normal reflex pathways.

You will be asked to squeeze, relax, and push. You may be asked to expel the balloon into the toilet. This test is performed in a private area of our office and typically takes around 30 minutes.

Preparation for the Procedure

One and a half hours (90 minutes) before leaving home, you will need to perform a Fleet enema, which can be purchased at your local pharmacy. The enema usually takes 15 minutes to work but may take up to an hour.

Most insurances will cover the test, however, please consult with your health insurance company prior to the procedure to ensure coverage.

After the test

You may resume your normal daily activities and diet following your test. You may drive yourself home after the procedure since no sedation is involved. If you experience any unusual symptoms or side effects, please contact your physician.

Your physician will need to interpret the results after the test is complete. Your physician will discuss the results of the test with you once they are available (usually within 1 week). Referrals to physical therapy and/or other specialists may be given to you at this time.