Upper GI and Small Bowel Follow Through

Your doctor has ordered an x-ray of your stomach and/or small bowel.

If you are an outpatient, the clinic will schedule the test for you. If you need to change or cancel your exam, please call GI Radiology (608) 263-9729.

Tell your Local Doctor and Radiologist if
- You are or may be pregnant
- Have allergies to barium or preservatives

Ask your doctor if medicines you take can be taken after the test. If you are diabetic, talk with your doctor about the dose you need to take the morning of your test.

Do not eat or drink anything after midnight before the test. Do not smoke, chew gum or eat hard candy the morning of the exam.

What Is an Upper GI and Small Bowel Follow Through?
An upper GI exam looks at the esophagus, stomach and duodenum (the first part of the small bowel). A small bowel follow through looks at the rest of the small bowel. You will need to drink barium as instructed during the procedure. Barium is a white, bland tasting liquid. You may need to swallow small white granules with water to create air in the stomach. Some patients require medicine to slow the stomach. You will need to change positions while they take x-rays and the doctor may press on your belly to move the barium in your bowel. During the small bowel follow through exam, several x-rays will be taken every 15 minutes to 1-hour until the barium gets to the large bowel.

Please allow up to 1 hour for an Upper GI and 1-4 hours for a small bowel exam.

After the Exam
A report of the test results will be sent to your local doctor. He/she will talk with you about the results.

You may take a mild laxative to help you expel the barium or drink plenty of fluids. The color of your bowel movements will be white for a day or two, until all the barium is out. You may go back to your normal diet unless your doctor gives you other instructions.