

## Further information and help

If you have any questions regarding your appointment time or the examination your doctor/ healthcare professional has asked for, please contact the Radiology Department.

### Radiology Department

Tel: 01851 708224

Open: Monday-Friday from 8.30am-5pm

### Patient Transport

If you require patient transport please contact:

Tel. 0300 123 1236

Please note that if you are arriving by car, please arrive ahead of time as parking is often scarce and it may take some time to find a parking space.

## Coronavirus measures

Given the current COVID-19 pandemic there are measures in place in our hospitals and at all healthcare appointments to ensure the safety of you, other patients and our staff.

You are asked to:

- please arrive at your appointment on time (do not attend early or late)
- attend alone where possible unless you require support (need to check if this is the case with ultrasounds)
- not attend your appointment if you have any symptoms of COVID-19, or if you have tested positive for COVID-19, or if you have been asked to self isolate by Test and Protect or via the Protect Scotland app.

You will be required to follow our safety instructions at our premises. For example, you must wear a clinical face mask at appointments

(which we will provide) unless you are medically exempt. If you are medically exempt, you must present a Scottish Government Exemption Card (visit [www.exempt.scot](http://www.exempt.scot) or tel. 0800 121 6240 for details of how to get one]. You will also be required to hand sanitise at several points when you attend, including on entry to the premises. If you have symptoms, you must immediately self-isolate and book a test (tel. 01851 601151 or email: [wi.covid19queries@nhs.scot](mailto:wi.covid19queries@nhs.scot))

You will also be required to keep a safe two metre distance from others at all times, with the exception of when one of our clinicians is providing direct clinical care, or an examination.

Please remember **FACTS** and stay safe.

## We are listening - how did we do?

We welcome your feedback, as it helps us evaluate the services we provide. If you would like to tell us about your experience:

- speak to a member of staff
- visit our website feedback section at: [www.wihb.scot.nhs.uk](http://www.wihb.scot.nhs.uk) or share your story at: [www.careopinion.org.uk](http://www.careopinion.org.uk) or 0800 122 31 35
- tel. 01851 708069 Monday-Friday between 9am-5.30pm.

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Written by: Radiology Department, Western Isles Hospital

### Disclaimer

The content of this leaflet is intended to augment, not replace, information provided by your clinician. It is not intended nor implied to be a substitute for professional medical advice. Reading this information does not create or replace a doctor-patient relationship or consultation. If required, please contact your doctor or other health care provider to assist you to interpret any of this information, or in applying the information to your individual needs.

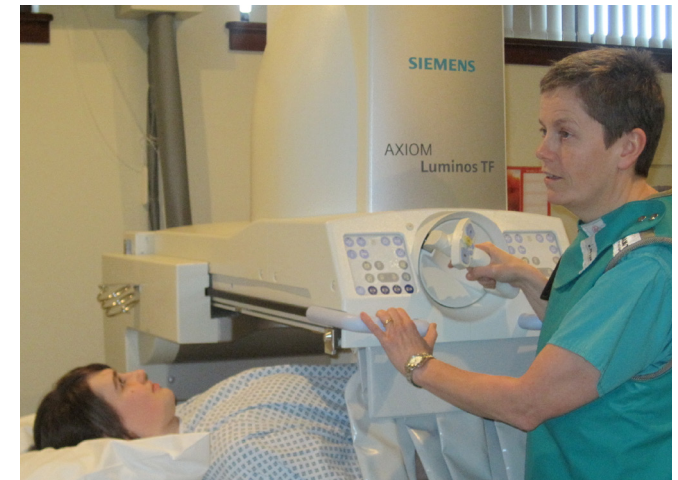
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Bòrd SSN nan Eilean Siar  
NHS Western Isles

Radiology Department

# Barium Swallow/ Meal



Patient information leaflet

## Having a Barium Swallow/Meal

Images of the stomach and gut do not show up very clearly on ordinary x-rays.

However, if the stomach is coated with barium, a white liquid that shows up on x-rays, much greater detail is obtained.

Imaging for Barium swallows/meals are done using a Fluoroscopy machine, which uses x-rays to obtain real-time images. A Radiologist usually performs this examination.

## Before the examination

Your appointment letter might ask you to not eat from midnight the evening before your examination.

We call this 'Fasting', and this generally allows for the stomach and small intestines to be empty for the examination. Consequently, this allows for better imaging of your x-ray.

If you have been asked to 'Fast', this will be stressed clearly in your appointment letter so you do not eat or drink anything in the hours before your examination.

However, if you take prescribed medications you are permitted to swallow these with a small amount of water.

In addition, if you are diabetic and take insulin/tablets, please ensure you eat enough the day before to prevent low blood sugar.

Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact the Radiology Department.

## When you arrive at Radiology

Your scan will take place in the Radiology Department, often called the "X-ray department".

On arrival, give your appointment letter to the staff member at the reception desk. They will ask you to take a seat in the waiting room and let the Radiologist know you have arrived.

## At your examination

The Radiographer assisting the Radiologist will collect you from the waiting room and lead you to a changing cubicle to put on a hospital gown.

Your name, date of birth and address will also be checked to ensure the correct patient is being imaged.

The Radiologist will talk you through the examination and give you Barium to drink while standing and lying in certain positions. This allows the Radiologist to view your ability to swallow in various positions.

## How long does it take?

Barium swallow appointments usually take 30 minutes.

Please remember that the department deals with emergencies as well as booked patients, and sometimes appointment delays are unavoidable.

However, if you wait longer than 20 minutes without an explanation, then please inform a member of staff.

## When will I get my results?

The Radiologist will write a report on the images they have taken and send a copy of your results back to the GP/healthcare professional who referred you for the scan.

They will then contact you with the results.

## Are there risks of radiation?

The amount of x-ray radiation received is minimal and will not harm you. X-ray imaging radiation is on average equivalent to what we all receive from natural background radiation over a period of 5-10 days.

The risk of radiation is higher for unborn children and therefore women of child-bearing age (between 12-55 years) may be asked about their menstrual history and pregnancy status.

Please note that you are assured that all safeguards to minimise radiation are taken.