

AG Anorectal Manometry

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What is an Anorectal Manometry?

An Anorectal Manometry is a test performed to evaluate patients with constipation or fecal incontinence. This test measures the pressure of the anal sphincter muscles, the sensation in the rectum, and the neural reflexes that are needed for normal bowel movements.

Preparation for the Procedure:

- Give yourself one or two Fleet enemas two hours prior to your study. You can purchase the Fleet enema from a pharmacy or supermarket.
- You should NOT eat anything during the two hours prior to the procedure.
 - If you are diabetic, this may involve adjusting your diabetic medications.
- You may take regular medications with small sips of water two hours prior to the study.

The Procedure:

- The test takes approximately thirty minutes.
- A nurse will explain the procedure to you, take a brief health history, and answer any questions you may have.
- The patient then lies on his or her left side. A small, flexible catheter, with a small balloon at the end is inserted into the rectum. The catheter is connected to a machine that measures the pressures of the anal and rectal muscles.
- During the test, the small balloon attached to the catheter will be inflated in the rectum to assess normal reflex pathways.
- The nurse will ask the person to relax, squeeze, and push at various times during the test.
 - To squeeze, the patient tightens the sphincter muscles as if trying to prevent anything from coming out.
 - To push, the patient bears down as if trying to have a bowel movement.
- The anal sphincter muscle pressures are measured during each of these maneuvers.
- The patient may drive themselves home and go about normal activities.

What can be learned from an Anorectal Manometry?

- The anal and rectal area contains specialized muscles that are helpful to regulate proper passage of bowel movement.
- Anorectal Manometry measures how strong the sphincter muscles are and whether they relax as they should during passing stool. It provides helpful information to the doctor in treating patients with fecal incontinence or severe constipation.

Risk during an Anorectal Manometry:

The Anorectal Manometry is a safe, low risk procedure and is unlikely to cause pain. While complications are rare; it is possible that a perforation (tear) or bleeding of the rectum could occur. Equipment failure is a remote possibility.