What is a Barium Enema?
A Barium Enema (or lower GI) is an X-ray of the colon or large intestine. This test helps your doctor see problems such as cancer, blockages and other disorders of the colon.

What is a Bowel Prep?
A bowel prep is done to clear the bowel of all solid matter. Its purpose is to prepare the bowel for surgery or a procedure. Please follow these instructions. Begin the bowel prep one day before your scheduled procedure.

COLOSTOMY/ILEOSTOMY PATIENTS: There is no prep needed.

To Prepare: For all other patients, you will need to purchase the following items from a pharmacy.

- Miralax in a large bottle (8.3 ounces or 238 grams).
- 4 Bisacodyl tablets (5 milligram tablets)
- Buy a large 64-ounce bottle of sports drink such as Gatorade.
- If you have diabetes, buy a no or low calorie drink such as Crystal Light instead.
- Mix your Miralax with the Gatorade the day before your test. Do not use carbonated beverages.

**There may be store brands of these products that cost less. Ask a pharmacist to help you find what you need**

On the day before your test:

1. Drink only clear liquids. Do not eat any solid food or milk products until your test is done. Clear liquids include Water, Strained fruit juices (no pulp), Popsicles, Ice, Soft drinks, Gatorade, Clear broth or bouillon, Jello, Kool Aid, and Coffee or tea (no milk or cream).
2. Follow the schedule in the table below for your bowel prep. You may need to get to the toilet right away. You will have many bowel movements through the day. They will become very watery. The bowels are clear or clean when there is only pale yellow fluid without flecks of stool.

1:00PM – Take 4 Bisacodyl tablets with a drink of clear liquid.

2:00PM – Mix the Miralax in a 64-ounce bottle of Gatorade or other clear liquid of choice. Cap the bottle and shake to dissolve the powder. Most people prefer to drink the liquid chilled so you may want to place it in the refrigerator.

4:00PM – Start to drink the Miralax. Drink one glass every 10 to 15 minutes. Drink it quickly rather than sipping small amounts because it does not taste that good. Finish drinking the liquid in 2 hours. Be sure to drink all of the liquid.
**12:00 Midnight** – Do not eat or drink anything after 12 midnight. You may gargle but do not swallow any liquid. Do not smoke after 12 midnight.

**The day of your test:**

- Do not eat or drink anything until your test is done.
- If you are to take your morning medications, take with small sips of water only.
- Bring a list of all medications you are currently taking.

Please arrive 30 minutes prior to your appointment time.
Please register at the St. Joseph Hospital Outpatient Pavilion on the first floor.

If you are pregnant or think you may be pregnant please advise the technologist.

**During your test**
The technologist will gently insert a small tube into the rectum and a tiny balloon will be inflated to prevent the tube from coming out during the test. The technologist will then begin filling your colon with liquid while the radiologist begins taking X-rays. You may be asked to move from side to side to image your colon in different views. You may also be asked to hold your breath for a few seconds at a time. Once the radiologist is through, the technologist will drain the liquid from your colon and the tube will be removed. An additional X-ray is obtained at the end of the test to check how well the bowel emptied. This test is usually completed within 45 minutes.

**After your test**
It is very important to drink a lot of water to help clear the barium out of your digestive system. We recommend eight glasses of water a day for at least two days. The radiologist and technologist will not be able to give you results after your test is through. However, a report will be sent to the doctor who ordered your test within one to two business days.

**Thank you**
We are honored that you have selected St. Joseph Hospital to serve your healthcare needs.