Solid Gastric Emptying Test

Read this information to learn:

• What a solid gastric emptying test is
• How to prepare
• What to expect
• Who to call if you have any questions

Your solid gastric emptying test has been scheduled for:

Date:________________________________________

Time:________________________________________

Toronto General Hospital
585 University Avenue
Medical Imaging Reception
Peter Munk Building – 1st floor
What is a solid gastric emptying test?
A solid gastric emptying test is a nuclear medicine test. It measures how fast solid food leaves your stomach.

Why do I need this test?
A doctor may order this test if you vomit often. You may have pain after eating, heart burn or acid reflux. A gastric emptying scan can also be used to diagnose a condition called gastroparesis. People with this condition have stomach muscles that don’t work properly.

How do nuclear medicine tests work?
Nuclear medicine tests are different from x-rays. X-rays show what your body looks like. Nuclear medicine tests show how your body and organs are working. They can help find problems that other tests can’t find.

Before a nuclear medicine test, you are given a medicine called a radiopharmaceutical (also called radioactive tracer). A radiopharmaceutical is radioactive. This means it gives off energy.

The radioactive tracer is usually given through an intravenous (IV) line placed in a vein. But it can also be swallowed or breathed in through the lungs.

The tracer travels to the part of the body that your doctor wants to see. When it reaches the right area, we take pictures. We use a special machine called a gamma camera. It takes pictures of the energy coming from the tracer.
How do I prepare for the test?

☐ Unless your doctor gave you different instructions, stop taking these medicines 3 days before your test:
  • Reglan (metoclopramide)
  • Zelnorm (tegaserod)
  • Erythromycin
  • Motilium (domperidone)
  • Bentyl
  • Donnatal
  • Levsin
  • Robinol

☐ Unless your doctor gave you different instructions, stop taking these pain medicines 2 days before your test:
  • Demerol
  • Codeine
  • Morphine
  • Oxycontin
  • Percodan
  • Percocet sedatives and/or tranquilizers (Valium, Librax, Ativan, or Thorazine)

☐ Don’t have anything to eat or drink for 6 hours before your appointment.
  • If you are gluten intolerant, please bring 2 slices of bread that you are able to eat. We can’t provide you with gluten-free bread for the test.
  • Tell us if you have any other food allergies before the test.
You can continue with your other normal medicines, except the ones that are listed above. Take them with a small amount of water 2 hours before your test.

- Bring a list of all the medicine you take (including the dose) with you to the test. If you have diabetes, bring your insulin or pill with you to the test. We will tell you when you can take it while you are in the nuclear medicine department.

- Remember to bring your health card (OHIP). If you do not have an OHIP card, please bring another form of government-issued photo ID (such as a driver's license, passport, or other provincial health card).

If you haven’t registered, come to Toronto General Hospital 30 minutes before your appointment. Go to Patient Registration on the Ground floor near the Elizabeth Street entrance.

**Important:** If there is any chance that you are pregnant, tell the technologist before you are given the radioactive tracer.

You will need to stop breastfeeding for 24 hours after this test. Tell the technologist if you are breastfeeding or chestfeeding.

**What can I expect?**

- We will give you egg white with toast and jam and some water. This food has the radioactive tracer in it. If you have an egg allergy, we will give you a different meal.

- Right after you finish eating we will take a 1 minute picture of your stomach with the gamma camera. We will repeat this every hour for 4 hours. Between pictures, you can walk and move around, but you are not allowed to exercise.
Are there any side effects?
There are no known side effects from this test. You can go back to your normal activities once the test is over. We will send a report to your doctor.

Who can I call if I have any questions?
If you have any questions or concerns or if you need to cancel or reschedule your appointment, please contact the nuclear medicine department at 416 340 3311.

The nuclear medicine department is on the 1st floor of Toronto General Hospital, EB1 – 408, near the Eaton elevators.