

## Colon Transit Study

### WHAT IS A COLON TRANSIT STUDY?

**A colon transit study is an examination that determines the length of time you body takes to process food.** In other words, how long it takes for food to travel from your stomach to exiting your body as a bowel motion. This is done by swallowing a series of small, differently-shaped plastic markers at the same time over a three-day period and then having a plain x-ray of the abdomen on the fourth day. If there are any plastic markers left in the colon on the fourth day, they will be visible on the x-ray. The radiologist can then determine the time it takes for food to move through the colon.

**This examination is often done in conjunction with a Defaecating Proctogram.**

### BEFORE THE PROCEDURE:

- **You will be given three capsules (labelled 1, 2 and 3)** when you make your appointment. Each capsule contains differently shaped markers.
- Remove the capsule from the foil. Don't open the capsule but swallow it whole with water at breakfast time, one per day as follows:
  - **Day 1:** Take capsule 1 (O shape)
  - **Day 2:** Take capsule 2 (Double-D shape)
  - **Day 3:** Take capsule 3 (Tri-chamber shape)
  - **Day 4:** Appointment for abdominal x-ray / Defaecating Proctogram
- It is important for the success of the study to take each capsule on the designated day and at the same time each morning.
- Continue with your normal diet and activities but it is important not to take any laxatives, suppositories or enemas to help your bowels move.

### COLON TRANSIT STUDY ONLY:

- You will be asked to change into a gown and lie on the x-ray table.
- A plain x-ray of your abdomen will be taken.

### COLON TRANSIT STUDY WITH A DEFAECATING PROCTOGRAM:

- You will be asked to change into a gown and lie on the x-ray table.
- A plain x-ray of your abdomen will be taken.
- After this, you will be asked to insert the suppository and try to retain it for 15 minutes. Empty the bowel as required over the next 45 minutes.
- The defaecating proctogram will then be performed (**see 'Defaecating Proctogram' information sheet**).

### AFTER THE PROCEDURE

- The radiologist may give you a brief verbal report after the x-ray, and a formal written report will be sent to your referring doctor within the day.

### RISKS OF THE PROCEDURE

- Because this procedure is done under x-ray guidance, should notify your doctor prior to booking an appointment if you are pregnant or suspect you may be pregnant.