

## Proctogram

Information for patients, relatives and carers

① For more information, please contact:  
The York Hospital, Wigginton Road, York, YO31 8HE  
Tel: 01904 726676  
or  
Scarborough Hospital  
Woodlands Drive, Scarborough, YO12 6QL  
01723 342044

---

<b>Contents</b>	<b>Page</b>
What is a Proctogram?.....	2
Who will be doing the Proctogram?.....	2
What preparation is needed? .....	2
What happens during the Proctogram? .....	2
What happens after the Proctogram?.....	2
Are there any risks or complications?.....	2
Are there any alternatives? .....	3
Tell us what you think of this leaflet.....	3
Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS).....	4
Teaching, training and research.....	4
Leaflets in alternative languages or formats.....	4

## **What is a Proctogram?**

This is a radiological examination of the rectum (back passage) and the muscles used when passing a motion.

## **Who will be doing the Proctogram?**

The procedure will be performed by a radiologist, a doctor specially trained in the use of x-ray equipment and carrying out this procedure.

## **What preparation is needed?**

There is no special preparation required for this examination. Please continue to eat and drink as normal. When you arrive in the Radiology department you will be shown to a changing cubicle and asked to undress and put on an x-ray gown. Dressing gowns are not provided so you may wish to bring your own with you.

## **What happens during the Proctogram?**

The procedure will be performed in a special x-ray room in the Radiology department. You will be asked to lie on your left hand side on a trolley. A nurse will gently insert a soft tube into your back passage and inject some barium contrast.

The tube will then be removed. You will be asked to sit on a bed pan on an x-ray machine and evacuate your bowel. The radiologist will take various x-ray pictures from behind a screen while you are doing this. Your privacy will be respected as much as possible throughout the procedure. The actual examination will take approximately 15 minutes.

## **What happens after the Proctogram?**

You will be shown to the toilet where there are also washing facilities if required. When you feel comfortable you will be free to leave. You are recommended to drink plenty of fluids for the following 24 hours to ensure that all the barium is cleared from your back passage. During this time you may experience some constipation.

## **Are there any risks or complications?**

A proctogram is a very safe procedure.

The procedure will use x-rays. The x-ray radiation used will be the smallest amount needed to get the information. Radiation can cause harm, including cancer, but the benefit of the information gained from the procedure will be much greater than the risk from the radiation.

You must inform a member staff if there is any chance you could be pregnant.

Allergic reactions to barium contrast can occur but are extremely rare. Please seek advice from your GP if you think you are experiencing one following the procedure.

### **Are there any alternatives?**

The alternative is a MRI Proctogram; however your doctor has assessed your needs and decided that this standard proctogram is the most appropriate examination for you. Some patients may require both tests.

**Tell us what you think of this leaflet**

We hope that you found this leaflet helpful. If you would like to tell us what you think, please contact: Dr D Petty, Consultant Radiologist, The York Hospital, Wigginton Road, York, YO31 8HE or telephone 01904 721140.

## **Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)**

PALS offers impartial advice and assistance to patients, their relatives, friends and carers. We can listen to feedback (positive or negative), answer questions and help resolve any concerns about Trust services.

PALS can be contacted on 01904 726262, or email [yhs-tr.patientexperienceteam@nhs.net](mailto:yhs-tr.patientexperienceteam@nhs.net)

An answer phone is available out of hours.

## **Teaching, training and research**

Our Trust is committed to teaching, training and research to support the development of health and healthcare in our community. Healthcare students may observe consultations for this purpose. You can opt out if you do not want students to observe. We may also ask you if you would like to be involved in our research.

## **Leaflets in alternative languages or formats**

If you would like this information in a different format, including braille or easy read, or translated into a different language, please speak to a member of staff in the ward or department providing your care.

Patient Information Leaflets can be accessed via the Trust's Patient Information Leaflet website: [www.yorkhospitals.nhs.uk/your-visit/patient-information-leaflets/](http://www.yorkhospitals.nhs.uk/your-visit/patient-information-leaflets/)

Owner	Dr D Petty, Consultant Radiologist
Date first issued	December 2004
Review Date	August 2027
Version	3 (issued August 2024)
Approved by	X-Ray, Fluoroscopy and DEXA Modality Meeting
Document Reference	PIL 1523 v3
© 2024 York and Scarborough Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust. All Rights reserved.	

[www.yorkhospitals.nhs.uk](http://www.yorkhospitals.nhs.uk)