ANORECTAL PHYSIOLOGY EVALUATION

What is Anorectal Physiology?
Anorectal physiology is the study of the function of the anus and rectum. It is a computer-assisted method whereby muscle strength and pelvic floor motion are evaluated. This evaluation will assist your physician in recommending appropriate medical or surgical treatment to you.

What are tests performed?
There are several different tests utilized in the evaluation the function of the anus and rectum. You may be scheduled for only one of them or several. Your physician will choose the most appropriate one for your particular medical condition. The test chosen will be explained to you by your physician and there are written explanations included in this packet. If you are still unclear or have questions please contact our clinical staff.

What is anal manometry?
Anal manometry is an evaluation of the strength of the muscles which control bowel movements. The test is performed by placing a small tube (about the size of a drinking straw) into the rectum. Pressure monitors inside the tube measure the muscle strength which is recorded on a computer graph similar to an electrocardiogram (EKG). A measure of rectal sensation will also be obtained. It is a painless procedure which takes about 10 minutes to perform.

What is electromyography (EMG)?
Electromyography (EMG) test the nerves that control the anal muscles and measure whether the muscles contract and relax correctly. It is performed using small sensor placed on the tip of a gloved finger which is then inserted into the rectum. This is similar to a rectal exam. This test is not painful is should only take about 10 minutes.

What is a rectal ultrasound?
A rectal ultrasound is a painless procedure designed to evaluate the anal muscle. A short ultrasound probe is inserted into the anus and sound waves are bounced off the muscle giving the doctor a precise anatomic picture of the muscle. This is most commonly ordered for patients with incontinence to locate any sphincter abnormalities or injuries. This takes approximately 10 minutes.
What is Defocography?
Defocography is a test of the function of the rectum and pelvic floor muscles. These muscles control the rectum and anus during evacuation. You will be asked to drink a small amount of barium and in addition a small amount of barium will instilled into the vagina and the rectum. You will then be told to bare down as if attempting to have a bowel movement. An x-ray recording will be made during your attempt. This test is painless and will be conducted by a radiologist and takes approximately 15 minutes.

What is a Dynamic Pelvic Floor MRI?
A Dynamic Pelvic Floor MRI views the pelvic floor, looking for possible dysfunctions which may manifest as stress incontinence, uterine prolapse, constipation and/or incomplete evacuation. No special preparation is required for this test. Once you are positioned on the MRI table, a small, lubricated catheter is inserted into the rectum. A clear gel will be instilled into the rectum. The catheter will then be removed. The tech will then begin to have you push the gel out while scanning it completed. This actual exam time usually takes less than 30 minutes.

When will I know the results?
You will be instructed to schedule an appointment once all of the tests have been completed. The results of the tests will be compiled and your physician will review those and discuss with you at that appointment. This could take approximately 1-2 weeks after all the tests are completed and the results are received.

You will not require a ride and will be able to leave immediately following the completion of the exams.

PREPARATION:
You will need to take 2 (two) regular saline fleet enemas which you may purchase at any pharmacy. You will find them in the laxative aisle and they are in a green and white package. Take the first enema two hours prior to leaving for the exam and then the second one hour prior to leaving.

There are no dietary restrictions. Please arrive 10 minutes prior to your scheduled appointment.

Exam Date: _______________ Time: ______________

You will be charged $100.00 if you do not provide our office with 24 hour in advance notice of cancelling and/or rescheduling this procedure for non-medical reasons.