

Anorectal Manometry

What is anorectal manometry?

Anorectal manometry (or ARM) is a diagnostic test, not a treatment or intervention. This test utilizes a catheter and a balloon to study the nerves and muscles of the anus and rectum. It tests pressures and sensations in the anus and rectum. The catheter is small, like a rectal thermometer. It is attached to a computer that records the pressures. The results look like a graph. The balloon contains latex, so please inform your doctor if your child is allergic to latex.

Why might a child need anorectal manometry?

This test is done in children with difficult to treat constipation, fecal incontinence (unable to stop stool from leaking), and abnormalities of the anus (anal malformations). The test is used to test the function of the anus and rectum. It tests whether children have normal sensation and are using their muscles correctly to hold and pass stool. It also helps to diagnose a condition called Hirschsprung disease.

How is the anorectal manometry performed?

A rectal examination is done before the test. A catheter with a balloon is passed through the anus to the rectum. The balloon is inflated and pressures and sensations are studied. The child may be asked to squeeze, cough and push the balloon out. The test may last from 15-30 minutes.

→ → What happens before anorectal manometry is

performed? Give a Dulcolax (bisacodyl) suppository the night before the procedure.

What happens after anorectal manometry is performed? Immediately following the completion of the test most children are able to return home and resume their daily activity. You may receive the results of the test immediately afterwards or your doctor might need to review the results and contact you within a few days.

What are the risks of anorectal manometry?

This is a very safe test. Rarely, the equipment can fail or there may be bleeding from the rectum as a result of irritation from the balloon or catheter. Otherwise, there are no adverse effects from the procedure.

What should we watch for after the test?

In most cases your child will experience no ill effects from the test. Some children might develop pain with passing a stool or bleeding from the rectum.

When should we seek medical advice?

You should contact your gastroenterologist if your child has persistent pain or discomfort or passes more than a small amount of blood from the rectum.

Turn over → →

Quick Facts

- Anorectal manometry is used to study the nerves and muscles of the anus and rectum:
 - Difficulty passing stool.
 - Fecal incontinence
 - Constipation
 - Hirschsprung's disease (a disease that can cause a blockage in the large intestine).

Photos of anorectal manometry catheters (with attached balloon)



If you have any questions or concerns don't hesitate to call us at 512-628-1810

() Your procedure is scheduled for: _____

() Please call our office 24 hours prior to the procedure if you need to cancel or reschedule. ()

ARM is performed by **April Jones, RN MSN, CPNP** at **Dell Children's Medical Group Pediatric GI**
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