



Ano-rectal manometry (ARM)

Ano-rectal manometry is a test that measures how well the muscles in your anal canal are working. It will also measure how well you feel different sensations of fullness in your rectum. The test is used to help determine the cause of constipation (difficulty moving your bowels) and incontinence (accidents, or difficulty controlling your bowel movements.) It helps the doctor to determine the best treatment.

How this test works:

A small, flexible tube, about the size of a thermometer, is gently inserted into your rectum. It is connected to a machine that measures pressures. The tube is gently repositioned to collect overall pressure readings in the rectum and anal canal. The tube has a small balloon secured to the end of it. By inflating the balloon with air, we can determine how well you sense fullness in your rectum.

To get ready for the test:

- Do not eat for four hours before you have the test. You may have liquids to drink and take your usual medicines.
- Several hours (about 2-3 hours) before the test, please give yourself one small plain water or saline enema (for example, a small fleets brand enema.) You can purchase an enema at a drug store without a prescription.

What happens on the day of the test?

- Please report to the outpatient registration on the first floor of Bon Secours St Francis Hospital about 15 minutes before the test is scheduled.
- After signing in, you will be escorted to the second floor waiting area.
- A nurse will ask you about your symptoms, explain the test, and answer any questions you may have.
- You will be asked to change into a hospital gown. It would be helpful to wear two-piece clothing.
- You will be asked to lie still on your left side for about 30 minutes to complete the test. The nurse will have you tighten your anal muscles (as if you are trying to keep from passing gas) and push (as if you are trying to have a bowel movement) several times during the exam.
- A balloon on the end of the tube is then inflated with air to determine how well you feel fullness in your rectum. The air is let out of the balloon and the tube is removed.

How long will it take?

The time involved to complete the test will vary. Please plan on being at the hospital between 1 to 1 ½ hours.

After the test:

- You will be able to drive yourself home.
- You may resume your usual diet and activity.
- Your doctor will have the results within a few days. Please arrange a time to discuss the results with your doctor.