Magnetic Resonance (MR) Defecography Patient Information Guide

What is MR Defecography Study?
MR Defecography (also known as MRI of the pelvic floor, rectum and sphincter) is an imaging exam that physicians use to examine the structure of the pelvic floor for potential weaknesses in the muscles when a bowel movement occurs. MR Defecography is done in an MRI machine and lasts approximately 30 minutes.

How do I prepare for MR Defecography?
Do NOT eat anything for four hours prior to scan. You may drink water.

What should I expect during the exam?
Please arrive at the BGC Imaging Center 30 minutes prior to your scheduled exam. You will change into a hospital gown and put on an adult diaper.

An MRI tech will bring you into the scanner room and you will lie on your side on the MRI table. The tech will then gently insert gel into your rectum through a small enema tip. Female patients will also be asked to insert gel into their vagina.

You will then be asked to turn onto your back and you will stay in that position for the rest of the exam. A set of MRI signal detectors, called an imaging coil, will be placed on your belly like a blanket.

After positioning you in the MRI scanner, the MRI staff will exit the room and go into the scanner control room next door.

When the exam begins, the MRI scanner will make repeated knocking sounds as it is taking the pictures of your pelvis. At times during the exam, the MRI tech will ask you to “bear down”, “relax”, or “hold in”. You will also be asked to empty your bowels at the end of the exam. The images will be read by our radiologist and a report will be sent to your physician.

What happens after my MR Defecography?
After the exam is complete, the staff will bring you to a private restroom to wash up. Feel free to ask the MRI staff people for help if you need it.

Are there any risks with MR Defecography?
There are no risks associated with MR Defecography. Some patients feel mild bloating or cramping from the air that enters the rectum when the gel is inserted. This feeling will lessen each time you pass gas. Most patients can return to normal activities after leaving the BGC Imaging Center. Check with your physician for any special instructions you may need to follow.

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