



Center for Incontinence and Female Pelvic Medicine

AnoRectal Manometry (ARM)

What to Expect at Your Appointment:

- Plan to stay about one (1) hour for your appointment.
- You should use a Fleets enema 2-3 hours PRIOR to your procedure. It is important that the rectum be free of stool for testing to be accurate.
- It is a good idea to wear comfortable clothing as you will need to remove clothing below the waist. If you use pads or absorbent products please bring a replacement with you.
- If you have any additional questions please call your physicians office.
- You will also be asked to keep a three day bowel diary and a record of your bowel habits and fluid and diet intake to show your physician.
- Bring a list of medications as these may have an effect on the bowels and bowel movements.

What is ARM?

AnoRectal Manometry (ARM) is a non-surgical diagnostic tool used to provide information about the pressure and function of the rectum and anal sphincter.

These muscles ring the anal canal and control bowel movements by relaxing and contracting.

A specialized catheter allows for the measurement of the pressure exerted by the sphincter muscles.

This procedure is not painful and offers your physician valuable information to aid in forming a treatment plan.

Purpose

ARM helps diagnose the cause of chronic constipation, fecal incontinence, or incontinence of gas which may be due to:

- Rectal/anal trauma
- Weakness due to chronic over-distention
- Systemic disease such as diabetes which may affect sensation
- Pelvic trauma

How it works

A thin catheter is inserted through the anus and into the rectal canal. The catheter is narrower than a drinking straw so it will cause little –if any – discomfort. This specialized catheter measures pressure from many directions at the same time.

Test procedure

- You will be asked to lie on your side with knees bent. The clinician examines your rectum with a gloved finger.
- The manometry catheter, a thin tube of soft plastic with a balloon at the tip, is inserted into your rectum. This catheter transmits the pressure recordings to a computerized testing system.
- At times during the test, the catheter may be slowly moved from one position to another.
- You will be asked to squeeze the anus as forcefully as possible or to keep these muscles completely relaxed.
- The balloon at the tip of the probe will be inflated. You should report when you have a sensation that your rectum is full and when you feel an urge to defecate. You may be asked to expel the balloon as you would a bowel movement.

After the test

- You will be given a follow up appointment with your physician to discuss the results of the test and a recommended treatment plan/options.
- You are free to return to previous activities.