

# Patient Information on Anorectal Manometry (ARM)

***YOU ARE NOT ALONE! ANYONE AT ANY AGE CAN BE AFFECTED BY CONSTIPATION OR FECAL INCONTINENCE. BY NO MEANS ARE THESE SYMPTOMS A PART OF NORMAL AGING! GET YOUR SYMPTOMS EVALUATED WITH ARM!***

## WHAT IS ANORECTAL MANOMETRY (or ARM)?

Anorectal manometry is a non-invasive procedure performed in our office to evaluate the function of your anal and rectal muscles, or “anorectal sphincter”. These muscles control how stool is released from your body.

The test is used to evaluate the root cause of symptoms such as:

- Chronic constipation
- Laxative dependence
- Fecal incontinence
- Anorectal pain
- Anal leakage
- Fecal smearing
- Difficulty having a bowel movement
- Childhood constipation

During the procedure a small, flexible catheter (depicted below), about the size of a thermometer, with two small balloons attach to the end of it, will be used to measure pressures in your anal sphincter muscles, sensation in your rectum, and neural reflexes required for normal bowel movements.

Through this information, we will be better able to understand the root cause of your symptoms and design a treatment plan specific to your condition.



## **PREPARATION FOR THE PROCEDURE**

PREP FOR ANORECTAL MANOMETRY IS NOTHING LIKE COLONOSCOPY PREP! There are no dietary restrictions before OR after the procedure. *The only prep required is two hours before your procedure, you'll be asked to give yourself 2 OTC Fleet<sup>®</sup> (or other brand) saline enemas at home.*

Do not eat for 2 hours prior to your procedure.

The procedure does not require a driver! There is no sedation involved. And, it is covered by the majority of insurances.

## **THE PROCEDURE**

The test itself takes approximately 20 minutes. Plan to be at our office for 45 minutes.

With the help of the catheter and balloon we will take important pressures and sensation measurements to help diagnosis your condition.

*After the exam, you may drive yourself home, and immediately resume all your normal activities and diet.*

## **What information is gained from ARM?**

The anal and rectal areas contain specialized muscles that help regulate the proper passage of stool from your body.

*The findings from your test will help us determine:*

- If your sphincter is underactive or overactive.
- If your pelvic muscles are not coordinating properly
- If a sensory deficit or neurologic condition is contributing to your symptoms.
- If your symptoms are the result of a disease of childhood, such as Hirschsprung's.
- If there was injury or damage to your anal sphincter, such as during pelvic surgery, childbirth, or mechanical trauma.

*Results can, then, be used to determine:*

- If additional testing is required to further investigate your symptoms.
- If biofeedback training would be effective to improve your symptoms, by improving sensation and/or retraining your muscles.
- To help with medication management, including dose and choice of laxative, if appropriate.
- Or, in the case of certain conditions such as scleroderma or Hirschsprung's, to direct the proper workup and management of these conditions.

### **Risks of Anorectal Manometry**

Anorectal manometry is a safe, low-risk procedure, and is unlikely to cause any pain. Complications are rare, though perforation, tearing, or bleeding of the rectum could occur. Equipment failure is a remote possibility.