

Transit Studies

What Is A Transit Study?

A transit study is a diagnostic test designed to evaluate the movement of material through your large intestine (colon). This procedure is particularly useful for assessing conditions like chronic constipation or symptoms of obstructed defecation, especially when standard treatments such as laxatives or stool softeners have proven ineffective. By understanding the transit time of content through your colon, your consultant can identify potential motility disorders and tailor an effective treatment plan for you.

Purpose Of The Test

This study is often recommended for patients experiencing:

- Chronic constipation
- Symptoms indicative of obstructed defaecation

It is commonly conducted alongside other evaluations of bowel function, including videoproctograms, anorectal physiology tests, and endoanal ultrasonography, to provide a comprehensive assessment of your bowel health.

Preparation Before The Test

Proper preparation is crucial for accurate results. Here's what you need to do:

- **Medication:** Discontinue the use of any laxatives or stool softeners at least one week prior to the test. This ensures that the assessment reflects your bowel's natural function without the influence of these medications
- **Diet:** You can continue with your regular diet and fluid intake leading up to the test
- **Pregnancy considerations:** If you are a woman of childbearing age, it's essential to inform your healthcare provider if there's any possibility of pregnancy, as the procedure involves exposure to X-rays

You will receive detailed written instructions before the test to guide you through the preparation process.

Procedure Details

The colonic transit study is straightforward and involves the following steps:

- **Capsule ingestion:** You will be provided with a series of capsules, each containing small markers that are visible on X-rays. Typically, you will swallow one capsule daily for three consecutive days. Each capsule contains markers of different shapes to distinguish them on the X-ray images
- **X-Ray imaging:** On the fifth day, you will attend the radiology department for an abdominal X-ray. This imaging session allows the radiologist to visualize the markers within your colon

The entire process is painless and does not require sedation or anaesthesia.

What Happens After The Test?

After the X-ray:

- **Activity:** You can resume all normal activities immediately
- **Diet:** There are no dietary restrictions; you may continue with your usual eating habits
- **Medication:** You can restart any laxatives or stool softeners that were halted prior to the test, as per your consultant's advice

The radiologist will analyse the X-ray images to count the remaining markers in your colon. This analysis helps determine the transit time and assess whether it falls within the normal range or indicates delayed transit. A comprehensive report will be sent to your consultant, who will discuss the findings with you and outline any necessary treatment plans.

Benefits Of A Transit Study

This study offers several advantages:

- **Non-invasive:** Involves only the ingestion of capsules and standard X-ray imaging
- **No need for sedation:** The procedure is painless and does not require any form of sedation
- **Accurate assessment:** Provides valuable insights into the functionality of your colon, aiding in the diagnosis of motility disorders

Potential Risks

The colonic transit study is generally safe; however, it's important to consider:

- **Radiation exposure:** The procedure involves a low dose of radiation from the X-rays, comparable to standard diagnostic imaging procedures
- **Capsule ingredients:** If you have dietary restrictions, such as vegetarianism or veganism, be aware that the capsules may contain gelatin. Please inform your healthcare provider if this is a concern

If you experience any discomfort or have concerns following the procedure, it's advisable to consult your healthcare provider.

Why Choose The Midlands Bowel Clinic?

- **Expertise:** Our team of specialists has extensive experience in diagnosing and treating bowel motility disorders
- **Comprehensive care:** We offer a range of diagnostic tests, including colonic transit studies, to ensure a thorough evaluation of your condition
- **Patient-centred approach:** Your comfort and understanding are our priorities. We provide clear instructions and support throughout the diagnostic process

Contact Us

If you are experiencing chronic constipation or symptoms of obstructed defecation, a transit study at the Midlands Bowel Clinic can help identify the underlying causes and guide an effective treatment plan.