

Colonic Manometry

Colonic manometry tests and measures pressure to assess the strength of the colon's movements, specifically how the large intestine contracts. It is done to help find the cause of motility problems through the large intestine such as constipation, stool accidents or other bowel problems.

How do we prepare for the colonic manometry test?

Your child's colon will need to be completely empty prior to the test. In many cases this can be done at home. This means your child will need to be on a clear liquid diet for about 24 hours before the test. Depending on the underlying problem, your child's doctor may admit them to the hospital before the test to clean out the colon. You will receive a phone call from the Perioperative Department the day before with further instructions.

What happens during a colonic manometry test?

Before the test, your child will get anesthesia to go to sleep. Then the doctor will place a small, flexible tube (called a catheter) through the rectum and into the colon. The tube will be left inside the colon and extend out through your child's rectum and held with a securing device against the upper leg. They may also have a diaper or brief in place as an added layer of protection. Once this is done, your child will be brought to the recovery room to wake up.

When the recovery period is completed, your child will be taken to the motility room. In here, the end of the tube will be connected to a computer on a portable cart. The computer will measure and record how well the colon works during the test. Your child will not be able to get out of bed and will have to use a bedpan, bedside commode or urinal during the rest of the test.

Your child will stay connected to the test for approximately 6-7 hours. During this time, they will be given medication and a special meal to measure how the colon works in response to each. Some children may have cramping or bowel movements during this time of the test. They can use a bedpan or bedside commode while the tube is in place. Once the test is complete, the catheter is then removed at the bedside and discharged home.