Your child is scheduled for a barium enema on ____________ at ____________.

Please report to Comer Children’s Hospital room 1A 20 minutes before your appointment time to register for the test.

WHAT IS A BARIUM ENEMA (BE)?
A barium enema is an x-ray examination of the large intestine, also known as the colon. This exam is performed with a special x-ray machine called fluoroscopy and a contrast material called barium. Fluoroscopy makes it possible to see the inside of the body moving. Contrast is a special liquid that is used to make certain parts of your child’s body visible on the x-rays.

RADIATION EXPOSURE
The Department of Pediatric Radiology at the University of Chicago Medical Center follows guidelines set forth by The Society for Pediatric Radiology and The Alliance for Radiation Safety in Pediatric Imaging to produce the highest quality images while using the lowest radiation dose possible. For more information please visit the Image Gentlysm website at imagegently.org.

PREPARATION FOR THE TEST
Avoid dressing your child in clothing that may contain metal objects such as snaps and zippers. An older child may be asked to remove jewelry and eye glasses. Your child will be given a gown and asked to undress from the waist down.

DURING THE TEST
A technologist will confirm your child’s identity, the test to be performed and ask if your child has any allergies. A parent is allowed to remain in the room to comfort the child, but will need to wear a lead apron. Since radiation is used, other children and pregnant individuals cannot be allowed in the x-ray room.

The technologist will position your child on the x-ray table. Sometimes it is necessary to wrap young children in a blanket or other positioning devices to help keep the child still. The technologist will make you and your child as comfortable as possible during the exam. The technologist will take an x-ray of the abdomen. After reviewing the image, a radiologist or nurse will carefully insert an enema tip into your child’s rectum. The liquid contrast material will be in a bag and the bag will be connected with a tube to the enema tip. Your child may experience discomfort when the enema tip is inserted and the colon is filled with the contrast material. The radiologist will use fluoroscopy to look at the colon. Your child must hold still for a few seconds while the fluoroscopy is taking place. This helps to make sure the images are clear. The enema tip will be removed after the radiologist reviews and approves the images.

A barium enema exam is usually completed in about 30 - 45 minutes.

AFTER THE TEST
After the test, your child can resume a regular diet. You or your child may notice a white residue in the stool in the next 48-72 hours. This is normal. Increasing fluids after the test will help the contrast leave the bowel more quickly. If your child is unable to have a bowel movement or experiences significant changes in bowel habits following the exam, please contact your physician. The results of the test will be sent to your doctor in 24 to 48 hours. If you have any questions about the procedure, please call the Pediatric Radiology department at 773-702-6600.