FAQs ABOUT FLUOROSCOPY

What is fluoroscopy?
Fluoroscopy is a test that is done using real-time x-ray to guide the radiologist. This would be used during tests such as upper gastrointestinal (UGI) follow-throughs, barium enemas, and any type of needle-guided procedures. Examples of needle-guided procedures would be biopsy, joint injection, or drainage. There are many types of fluoroscopy tests. A gastrointestinal (GI) test includes the esophagus, stomach, small intestines, and large intestines. An arthrography test (or arthrogram) sees the bone joint spaces. An injection test is where a steroid is injected into joint space. Fluoroscopy is performed in a room with special equipment that lets the radiologist and the technologist watch your test on a TV screen in real time.

Are there any special instructions I need to follow before my test?
An upper gastrointestinal (UGI) follow-through and small bowel follow-through may require you to not eat or drink anything after midnight the night before your test.
A barium enema has a “prep kit” with instructions for you to follow the day(s) before your test. Please follow the instructions carefully.
If you are scheduled for an arthrogram or an injection test, tell your doctor, radiologist, or technologist if you have any allergies, especially to iodine or x-ray dye (contrast).

What happens before the test?
Your technologist will take you to the changing room (where you may need to change into a gown). Your test will be explained to you in the test room.

When will I speak with a doctor?
Shortly after you change into your gown, you will meet with one of the radiologists. The radiologist will go over the test process with you and answer any questions you may have.

How long will my test take?
Fluoroscopy tests can last from 30 minutes to many hours, depending on your test.

What happens after my test?
After your GI tests, you may return to your normal activities unless you are told differently. You may notice that your bowel movements are white for a couple of days after the test — this is just the barium going through your intestines. Drink a lot of fluids to help move the barium through your system.
After your arthrogram or injection procedure, you should rest for 24 hours and avoid strenuous activity. Check with your care provider to see if you can view your test results through MyUPMC at MyUPMC.com.