RECTAL SUCTION BIOPSY

What is this procedure?
A rectal suction biopsy is a test done for children with severe or long term constipation (difficulty passing stools). The test allows the doctor to take a small sample of tissue (biopsy) from the rectum (the last part of the large intestine). The pathologist will then check to see if there are nerve (ganglion) cells in the sample.

What happens during the procedure?
A special instrument is placed in the child’s rectum by the doctor to obtain pieces of the lining of the rectum for inspection. Two good specimens are needed for the study. Sometimes it takes more than two times to get enough samples. This is a short test, lasting 5-10 minutes, causing very little discomfort.

Does my child need to do anything before the test?
No preparation is required unless your child is a toddler or older, then an enema may be ordered before the test. Please bring an extra diaper for babies and toddlers. Please do not use any diaper cream, like Desitin or A & D ointment, on your child’s bottom before the test. If needed, you can apply it when the test is finished.

Are there any special instructions after the test?
You can feed the child right after the test. There are no restrictions that you need to follow.

Are there any side effects of the procedure?
You may see some blood after the procedure and with the first bowel movement. Call the physician if you see blood clots, blood that is greater than the amount of one teaspoon at a time, or ongoing bleeding.

Will the physician know the results right away?
No, it usually takes a week to get the results back.

If the biopsies show that there are no nerve cells, what does that mean?
It means your child probably has a condition called Hirschsprung’s disease. The physician will discuss this with you in more detail after the results come back.

For questions please call ________________________________.