About Your Anal Sphincter EMG (Electromyography)

What is anal sphincter EMG?
The anal sphincter is the muscle valve at the opening of the rectum. This test shows how well the anal muscle sphincter contracts with electrical stimulation. This test can help find the cause of problems, such as constipation or loss of bowel control.

How does the test work?
When nerves or muscles are injured or diseased, their electrical activity changes. This test records the electrical activity from the anal sphincter. This information can help the doctor find out if the cause of the bowel problem involves nerves or muscles in that area.

Before the test
You will be told to give yourself enemas at home the day of the test.

During the test
While you are lying on your left side, a small probe will be placed just inside of the rectum, about 2 to 3 inches. There is a very minimal discomfort and little, if any, pain involved. The test lasts about 5 minutes.

Going home
You may resume your normal activity. If you have any questions or concerns, please call your doctor.