



*Better
Together*

Patient information

Carbon 13 Urea Breath Test

Gastroenterology and Hepatology Directorate

What is the test for?

The test you are going to have is called a Carbon 13 urea breath test, and it is testing to see if you have the germ called *Helicobacter pylori* (H.pylori) in your stomach. Usually this test is used to check whether a course of treatment you have already had has been successful.

What is H.pylori?

It is a germ that lives in the lining of the stomach and damages the stomach's protective layer and produces inflammation. This causes acid production to increase and causes changes in the lining of the stomach and may result in ulcers.

Who gets H.pylori?

It is usually picked up in childhood and how it happens is not fully understood. The majority of people with H.pylori are unaware that they have it. Although the number of people infected is large, only a small number of people infected go on to develop an ulcer.

Preparation for the Test

You will have nothing to eat or drink from 10 pm the night before your test.

If you are taking regular medication/inhalers please bring them with you to take after the test.

You will need to **stop** any stomach medication such as Losec or Zantac for fourteen days before the test, as these interfere with the results of the test.

If you have been on any antibiotics in the last six to eight weeks or have an allergy to oranges please telephone for advice Tel: 0151 706 2725

Text phone number: 18001 0151 706 2725

What are the risks of having a Carbon 13 Urea Breath Test?

There is no significant risk to having a Carbon 13 Urea Breath Test.

Are there any alternatives to the Carbon 13 Urea Breath Test?

A stool collection, this is a test for H Pylori by collection of a sample of faeces (poo) or an invasive Endoscopy which is a camera test into the oesophagus (gullet), stomach and duodenum (first part of the small bowel).

What will happen if I decide not to have treatment?

It will not be possible to determine if the stomach bacteria is present.

Procedure

The test takes 20 to 30 minutes. You will be asked to blow into a straw in a test tube and also have a small drink. The results take approximately one week. A copy of the results will be sent to your family doctor (GP) and also inserted into your hospital notes.

How do I get rid of the H.Pylori if the test shows that I have it?

Once your GP has a copy of your results, he or she may need to see you to start a second course of treatment. Whichever treatment your doctor prescribes it is very important to follow the course exactly and finish all the medication.

What happens next?

The aim of the therapy is to cure your H. pylori and in most cases it gets rid of it. However, in some patients the bug continues or comes back, and if you have symptoms a further course of permanent treatment may be needed.

Further Information

If you require further information please contact:

- **Senior Administrator from 8.30am to 2.30pm
Monday to Friday.
Tel: 0151 706 2725
Text phone number: 18001 0151 706 2725**
- **Specialist Nurse
Tel: 0151 706 3850
Text phone number: 18001 0151 706 3850**
- **NHS 111
Tel: 111**

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All Trust approved information is available on request in alternative formats, including other languages, easy read, large print, audio, Braille, moon and electronically.

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