

Please inform a member of staff if you have:

- Taken ANTIBIOTICS within the last 28 days.
- Taken PROTON PUMP INHIBITORS within the last 14 days.
- Taken ANTACIDS or RANITIDINE on the day of the test.
- If you are diabetic.

What happens after the test?

You can resume your normal activities and your normal diet.

The samples are sent away to a laboratory for analysis. The results will be sent back to the doctor that referred you usually within two weeks.

There are no side effects to this test. If you notice any side effects please inform the GI physiology nurse or your doctor.

Additional information

The hospital car park fee for 3 hours is £4.50 and for 4 hours is £6. As you will not be able to leave the unit during the test please ensure you have the correct amount of cash with you.

We are happy to answer any questions you may have regarding this appointment. For further information about your procedure, please call the following number:

**GI Physiology Department on
0118 322 7725 (office hours)**

Visit our website www.royalberkshire.nhs.uk

Department of Gastroenterology
Royal Berkshire NHS Foundation Trust
London Road
Reading RG1 5AN
0118 322 5111 (switchboard)

This document can be made available in other languages and formats upon request.

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Helicobacter pylori breath test

Information for adult patients

GI Physiology Practitioners
0118 322 7725

This leaflet explains what a Helicobacter pylori (H. pylori) breath test involves and how to prepare for it. If there is anything you do not understand, please ask a member of the GI Physiology team.

What is a Helicobacter Pylori (H. pylori) breath test?

The H. pylori breath test is a non-invasive, safe, painless and simple way to diagnose the presence of H. pylori, a bacterium that can be found in the stomach.

The test is performed either

- To confirm whether you are suffering from H. pylori infection to help diagnose your condition.
- To ensure eradication of the bacterium following treatment.

What does the test do?

H. pylori breaks down urea into ammonia and carbon dioxide. The test is based on this unique feature of the bacteria.

Urea is a harmless substance found in food and in your body.

All foods contain a substance called carbon 13 (¹³C), in varying amounts. This ¹³C can

be detected in the carbon dioxide that you breathe out. The actual amount of ¹³C in the breath will depend on the type of food that you have eaten.

Urea that is high in ¹³C is used in the test. Analysis of samples of your breath taken before and after consuming ¹³C-Urea will show if the bacteria are present in your stomach.

How is the test performed?

The test will take about 45 minutes. It is recommended that the breath test is performed while you are in a seated position.

The test requires you to drink a “test meal” This will help keep the test ¹³C-Urea solution in your stomach

You will give samples of your breath by blowing into a set of tubes.

You will drink a small quantity of ¹³C-Urea dissolved in water. This is a safe, colourless and tasteless liquid.

You will then be asked to sit quietly, without eating, drinking or smoking for 30 minutes.

Finally, you will give more samples of your breath to complete the test.

How do I prepare for the test?

- You must not smoke during the test.
- Do not have anything to eat for **4 hours before the test**. During this time, drink only water. If fasting is a problem e.g. diabetic patients, please contact the nurse for advice.
- Do **not** take the following medications:
 - **ANTIBIOTICS** – stop 28 days before the test.
 - **PROTON PUMP INHIBITORS** (e.g. Nexium, Omeprazole, Lansoprazole) – stop 14 days before the test.
 - **ANTACIDS or Ranitidine** – do not take on the same day as the test.

Do not stop taking medication without the advice of your doctor.