

# Having a urodynamics test

The aim of this leaflet is to answer any questions you may have about having a urodynamics test. It explains the benefits, risks and alternatives of the procedure as well as what you can expect when you come to hospital. If you have any further questions, please speak to a doctor or nurse caring for you.

## What is a urodynamics test?

It is a test on the bladder to show what happens to the bladder on filling and emptying. We may also perform X-rays during the test. This is called video urodynamics.

## Why should I have a urodynamics test? What are the benefits?

The test will recreate the symptoms you are experiencing and enable us to diagnose the problem and offer you a treatment plan.

## Are there any other alternatives?

There is no other way for the medical team to gain the information the test will provide.

## How can I prepare for a urodynamics test?

### Five days before your test

If you are taking any medicines for your bladder you must **stop** taking them **five days before the test**. (However some patients may need to stay on these tablets, and we will advise you accordingly).

Examples of such medicines are:

- oxybutinin tablets or patches (eg Ditropan® or Kentera®)
- solifenacin (Vesicare®)
- tolterodine (Detrusitol®)
- fesoterodine (Toviaz®)
- mirabegron (Betmiga®).

If you are unsure of which medicines to stop please phone the department on [t: 020 7188 6785](tel:02071886785). Failure to stop these medicines may result in the test being cancelled as they may mask the problem we are trying to identify. However you must carry on with any medicines you take for other conditions.

### Three days before your test

We have enclosed a bladder diary that you must complete over a three day period. It does not need to be three days in a row. We need to know how much you are drinking and urinating. We appreciate it is sometimes difficult to do this but it is very important to do your best as it will give us valuable information. If you have not received a bladder diary with this leaflet, please contact us using the contact details on the back page. **If you have a catheter you do not need to fill in the diary.**

You can eat and drink normally on the day of the test.

It is also important that you are not constipated when coming for the test as this could affect the result. If you are constipated in the days leading up to the test, take some laxatives (available from your local pharmacy).

Try to arrive at the department with a comfortably full bladder. Do not pass urine until you have spoken to the nurse who is performing the test. If this is not possible arrive early for the appointment and drink to fill up your bladder as for the first part of the test you will need to empty your bladder into a special machine called a flowmeter. This measures how much urine you pass and the flow of the urine. If you have problems holding on with a full bladder, we will understand. We will then test your urine. If there is any infection we will not be able to perform the test and will give you antibiotics and rebook the test therefore if possible you need **to have your urine tested by your GP surgery five days prior to the test date**. This will enable you to have any infection treated and not delay the test.

If your urine is infection free we will ask you to undress from the waist down and change in to a gown that opens at the back.

The nurse performing the test will then explain what is going to happen and ask you about the symptoms you are experiencing.

## What happens during the test?

Please allow at least an hour for your appointment. There will be two nurses and there may be a doctor present during the test.

Once you are changed we will ask you to lie on a couch for the next part of the study that looks at how your bladder fills. To do this we will pass one fine tube into the bladder and another in to the rectum (back passage). Once the lines are in place, ladies will then sit on the toilet and men will stand in front of the toilet and the tubes are then connected to a bag of fluid which we use to slowly fill your bladder at a controlled rate. This is to enable us to measure the pressures both inside and outside the bladder. Only a small amount of fluid will be passed in to the rectum.

During the filling stage we will ask you questions on what you are feeling and these are recorded on the computer screen. Once the bladder feels full we will ask you to urinate with the tubes in. This will show us what happens to your bladder when you empty it. Remember we are attempting to recreate what happens to your bladder and mimic the symptoms you experience, so if you leak during the test please don't worry or be embarrassed.

## Will I feel any pain?

You may feel a little discomfort or stinging when we insert the bladder line due to the gel we use which acts as an anaesthetic but this will pass in seconds. You may also experience some discomfort when we are filling the bladder.

## What happens after the procedure?

Once the test is finished we will remove the tubes. You can then use the toilet facilities where we will provide a cloth and a towel, and you can get changed in private. The nurse will then chat to you and if possible explain what the test shows. **You may need to wait to see the doctor or return on another date for a follow-up appointment.**

## Are there any risks associated with the test?

We do not routinely give antibiotics before the test. After having the urodynamics test there is a small possibility that you may develop a urinary tract infection. This can be caused by the insertion of the catheter. To prevent this we ask you to drink extra fluids when you get home.

## What do I need to do after I go home?

We advise you to drink plenty of fluids once you go home to prevent a urinary tract infection. You will be able to resume all your normal activities immediately after the test.

## Will I have a follow-up appointment?

You will either be seen by the doctor once the test is finished but if this is not possible we will make you a follow-up appointment to discuss your treatment.

### Contact us

If you have any questions or concerns about the test or medications please don't hesitate to contact the clinical nurse specialist in the Urology Centre on **t:** 020 7188 6785 (between 9am and 5pm). If there is no answer, please leave a message and your telephone number and a nurse will call you back.

For more information leaflets on conditions, procedures, treatments and services offered at our hospitals, please visit **w:** [www.guysandstthomas.nhs.uk/leaflets](http://www.guysandstthomas.nhs.uk/leaflets)

### Pharmacy Medicines Helpline

If you have any questions or concerns about your medicines, please speak to the staff caring for you or call our helpline.

**t:** 020 7188 8748, Monday to Friday, 9am-5pm

### Your comments and concerns

For advice, support or to raise a concern, contact our Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS). To make a complaint, contact the complaints department.

**t:** 020 7188 8801 (PALS)      **e:** [pals@gstt.nhs.uk](mailto:pals@gstt.nhs.uk)

**t:** 020 7188 3514 (complaints)      **e:** [complaints2@gstt.nhs.uk](mailto:complaints2@gstt.nhs.uk)

### Language and accessible support services

If you need an interpreter or information about your care in a different language or format, please get in touch.

**t:** 020 7188 8815      **e:** [languagesupport@gstt.nhs.uk](mailto:languagesupport@gstt.nhs.uk)

**Leaflet number: 2433/VER5**

Date published: May 2020

Review date: May 2023

© 2020 Guy's and St Thomas' NHS Foundation Trust

A list of sources is available on request