



## ***PATIENT INFORMATION***

### **24 hour pH monitoring**

You have been asked to attend an appointment at hospital to have a test carried out to investigate the functioning of your stomach and oesophagus (gullet).

The test will take approximately 30 minutes and you will need to return 24 hours later.

#### **What is the oesophagus?**

The oesophagus is a long muscular tube which connects the mouth to the stomach. Between the lower end of the oesophagus and the stomach there is a special sphincter muscle (a valve). The valve opens to allow food and drink to pass into the stomach but then closes again to prevent stomach contents regurgitating (refluxing) back into the oesophagus.

Its function is to pass chewed food and liquids from the mouth to the stomach by progressive muscle contractions.

#### **What is the test for?**

This test allows us to measure the amount and severity of acidic stomach contents that maybe leaking up from the stomach into the oesophagus.

These measurements are taken for a 24 hour period so that we can see what happens after your meals and at night when you are asleep.

The test will also show us how well your symptoms are related to the presence of acid in your oesophagus.

## **How is the test carried out?**

A thin tube with a small probe on the end is gently passed through your nostril. You will be asked to drink a beaker of water through a straw. This will help the tube to move through the throat and down the oesophagus.

You will be able to breathe normally at all times.

Once the tube is in place you will feel a 'lump' sensation in your throat. It is not painful, just a little uncomfortable and should settle down within 30 minutes.

The end of the tube will be positioned in the oesophagus, above the stomach.

The tube will be taped securely to the outside of your nose, passed around your ear and attached to a small recording box which is worn on a shoulder strap or a belt around your waist.

You will be given a set of instructions before you leave.

You will be sent home and able to eat, sleep and carry out your normal daily routines.

You will return the following day to have the tube removed. Removal of the tube is painless and takes a few seconds.

## **Instructions for 24 hour acid testing**

### **Prior to the test:**

Please do not eat or drink anything for 3 hours before the test (unless you are diabetic then continue to eat as normal).

If you should suffer with asthma please continue to use your inhalers as directed by your GP.

If you take medication for your heart please continue to take this as directed by your GP.

Please **STOP** taking the following antacid medications **SEVEN DAYS** prior to the test:

Losec (Omeprazole)

Protium (Pantoprazole)

Zoton (Lansoprazole )

Pariet (Rabeprazole)

Nexium (Esomeprazole)

Please **STOP** taking the following medication **THREE DAYS** prior to the test:

Zantac (Ranitidine)

Tagamet (Cimetidine)

Please **STOP** taking the following medications **24 HOURS** prior to the test:

Gaviscon

Tums

Algicon

Rennies

Maalox

Buscopan

Nifedipine

Spasmonal

Mucogel

Bisodol

Topal

Colofac ( Mebeverine)

Please **STOP** taking any simple antacid preparations from your local pharmacy.

### **Frequently asked questions: 24 hour acid monitoring**

#### **What is the benefit of having the test done?**

The main benefit of the test is to give your consultant a clear picture of the degree of acid reflux. Using the information from this test your consultant can discuss any treatment you require or provide reassurance if the test is normal.

#### **What are the risks and side effects of this test?**

- 24 hour acid monitoring tests are generally felt to be safe. The test may cause slight discomfort in the nose and the throat but should not be painful.
- You may feel slightly sick when the tube is first positioned in the oesophagus but this should settle down quickly.
- Other side effects of this test are minor and can include a mild sore throat, nosebleed, runny nose, fainting or wheezing. However, these side effects can be easily and quickly dealt with at the time.
- There is a very small risk that the probe could damage the oesophagus, however this is very unlikely as the catheter is flexible and the nurse who performs the test has had specialised training and is very experienced.
- During the test, the majority of patients are able to eat, sleep and go about their daily activities. However some prefer not to work because they feel self-conscious about having a tube coming from their nose.
- If you have any allergies, please inform the nurse before your test commences.
- Please inform your referring consultant if you are pregnant, prior to your appointment.

### **Are there alternatives to 24 hour acid monitoring?**

Nothing can take the place of 24 hour acid reflux monitoring. However, other studies are used to investigate other functions of the oesophagus.

### **Will the test be painful?**

The test is not painful and you will not need sedation. However, you will have the feeling of a 'lump' in your throat whilst the tube is in place. Your throat may feel slightly rough or uncomfortable for a short time after the test. This can be eased by gargling salty water.

### **Is the probe safe?**

Please do not worry; the probe is very small and safe.

### **Are there any special instructions after the test?**

- You may go back to your normal routine
- You will be able to drive after if you wish
- You can eat and drink as normal
- When you have returned after 24 hours to have the tube removed you may restart any medication that we may have asked you to stop.

### **When will I get my results?**

The reading of your results will be analysed by your referring consultant. Your results will be discussed with you at your next clinic appointment.

**If you have any concerns or questions please contact the  
Nursing Staff on Hutchings Day Unit on 01803 655919**