

# About your 13 Carbon Urea breath test



*You have been referred to hospital for a carbon urea breath test.  
This booklet explains what will happen to you when you attend  
for your appointment.*

*If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to call us  
on 01273 696955 ext 4570. We'll be glad to help.*

## What is a 13 Carbon Urea breath test?

This is a simple way to determine whether a bacteria called *Helicobacter Pylori* is present in your gut. If it is, it could be responsible for the gastric symptoms you have been experiencing. You will be asked to provide 2 breath samples by blowing into an empty test tube through a straw. You will then be asked to drink some orange juice, which will delay the rate at which your stomach empties. Next you will drink a solution containing 13 Carbon Urea, which is a substance that naturally occurs in the body. It is tasteless and perfectly safe. You will then be asked to sit down for 30 minutes to wait for the solution to disperse. After that, you will be asked to blow into another 2 test tubes and you will then be allowed to go home.

## Who will be performing the test?

The test will be performed by a nurse or health care assistant who has been trained to do so.

## Are there any significant risks?

None. And there are no after-effects or side-effects.

## What are the benefits?

The test allows us to identify the bacteria *Helicobacter Pylori*, which may have been causing your stomach problems and could make them worse in the future if not treated.

## Are there any alternatives?

Yes, an *H. Pylori* stool antigen test. This requires submitting a fresh stool sample to the laboratory following a request by your GP or your referring consultant.

## How do I prepare for my test?

- Stop taking the following tablets **14 days before your test**:
  - Omeprazole (Losec)
  - Lansoprazole (Zoton)
  - Pantoprazole (Protium)
  - Rabeprazole (Pariet)
  - Ranitidine (Zantac)
  - Axid (Nizatidine)
  - Esomeprazole (Nexium)
  - Antibiotics.
- Do not take ANY medication on the day of your appointment. If you are a diabetic on medication (insulin or tablets) and need advice, please contact the health professional who looks after you regarding your diabetes. If you do not have a health professional who looks after you regarding your diabetes, please call the hospital on **01273 696955 Ext 4205** and speak to one of the Diabetes Nurse Specialists.
- Have **NOTHING** to eat or drink for **6 hours before your test**.

## What should I bring with me to the unit?

- A list of ALL your medication.
- Your reading glasses.
- Do not bring any valuables with you.

## Can I park at the hospital?

Parking space at the Royal Sussex County Hospital is very limited, so please set off in plenty of time for your appointment and be prepared to wait in the car park queue.

There is ample parking at the Princess Royal Hospital. If you have sedation for your procedure and intend to go home by taxi, you will need a responsible adult to accompany you, as taxi companies will not accept responsibility for you travelling alone. Although you may use public transport to come to hospital, we strongly advise you not to travel home by bus or train, following sedation.

## What happens when I arrive in reception?

Please report to the desk. Our receptionist will check your details and ask you to take a seat in the waiting room. You will then be called through by a nurse or health care assistant, who will explain the test to you and will ask you about your medical history. If you have any questions please do not be afraid to ask.

## What happens after the test?

You will be allowed to go home and the result of your test will be sent to you and your GP in approximately 4 weeks.

## Frequently asked questions

### Will it hurt?

No, it is a very straightforward test and is not painful in any way. There are no after effects or side effects.

## How long will it take?

The test will take approximately 45 minutes to 1 hour, in total.

## When will I get my results?

Results are usually back in approximately 4 weeks and we will inform you and your GP of your result.

## What do I do if I need to cancel or change my appointment?

If you need to cancel or change your appointment please call us on **0300 303 8517**.

## Your comments and suggestions

If you have any concerns about your treatment or care, please bring them to our attention. We will do our best to help.

If you feel that you would like some support raising your concerns, the Patient's Advocate is available to speak on your behalf.

You can contact the Patient's Advocate by telephone between 10am and 4pm on:

**01444 441881 Ext. 5909** (Princess Royal Hospital)  
or **01273 696955 Ext. 4029** or **4588** (Royal Sussex County Hospital)  
Or by email at [pals@bsuh.nhs.uk](mailto:pals@bsuh.nhs.uk) for either site.

We always welcome new ideas and suggestions. Please let us know if you feel there are ways in which we can improve our service.

Thank you for taking the time to read this booklet. If there is anything at all that you don't understand, or you have any questions, please call us on **01273 696955 Ext. 4570**.



Space for notes/questions

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**Disclaimer**

The information in this leaflet is for guidance purposes only and is in no way intended to replace professional clinical advice by a qualified practitioner.

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