

Having a Breath Test

If you have any questions prior to your procedure please ring on 0207-460-5605

What is a Breath Test?

The urea breath test (UBT) is a test for diagnosing the presence of a bacterium, *Helicobacter pylori* (*H. pylori*) infection in the stomach. *H. pylori* causes inflammation, ulcers, and atrophy of the stomach.

The test also may be used to demonstrate that *H. pylori* has been eliminated by treatment with antibiotics.

Preparing for you Breath Test

Do not take any proton pump inhibitors (Prilosec, Prevacid, Aciphex, Nexium, Protonix) or Pepto-Bismol for at least 2 weeks before the **test**.

Have stopped taking anti-biotics 4 weeks before the test

Do not eat or drink anything after midnight on the day of the test

What happens when I come for a Breath Test?

During the test you will swallow a capsule containing urea, which is made from an isotope of carbon. (Isotopes of carbon occur in minuscule amounts in nature, and can be measured with special testing machines.)

If *H. pylori* is present in the stomach, the urea is broken up and turned into carbon dioxide. The carbon dioxide is absorbed across the lining of the stomach and into the blood. It then travels in the blood to the lungs where it is excreted in the breath.

Samples of exhaled breath are collected, and the isotopic carbon in the exhaled carbon dioxide is measured.

The breath test takes approximately 30 mins

What are the alternatives to a Breath Test? *You will probably already have had other investigations that have been inconclusive which is why a breath test has been requested*

Getting your results

You can talk to your Consultant about the results and any necessary treatment at your next appointment.

If you have any questions or need further information, please contact the Endoscopy unit:

Tel: 020 7460 5605

Fax: 020 7460 2438

The unit is open from 8.00am to 6.00pm, Monday to Friday.