

## 24hour Ambulatory pH Monitoring Patient information

Norfolk Physiology Unit Centre Block, Level 2 Tel. 01603 288281

**Please note:** this test requires two visits to the hospital on consecutive days. If you need to book hospital transport, remember to book it for your return visit as well.

**Please make sure you understand and follow these instructions carefully - otherwise your test may need to be postponed and a new appointment arranged. Please be aware this causes delays for other patients. If you need to cancel your appointment, please give as much notice as possible so we can offer your appointment to another patient.**

### What special preparation is there?

You will need to attend for your test having had **nothing** to eat or drink (**including sweets, chewing gum etc.**) for at least **4 hours** before your test. In practice this will mean nothing from 4am for morning appointments and nothing from 10am for afternoon appointments.

The test will take up to 1½ hours on your first visit and 15 minutes on your return visit.

Please be aware that we cannot accommodate children during the test.

### Medication:

If you are taking any medication for the relief of heartburn or indigestion such as Emozul, Esomeprazole (Nexium), Lansoprazole (Zoton), Omeprazole (Losec, Mepradec, Prilosec) Rabeprazole (Pariet), Pantoprazole (Protium), you **must discontinue them for four clear days before the day of your test.**

If you are taking Ranitidine (Zantac), Cimetidine (Tagamet), Famotidine, Nizatidine or medication to help your stomach/bowel empty quicker such as Metoclopramide (Maxilon), or Domperidone (Motilium), **you must discontinue them for two days prior to the test.** You may continue to use simple antacids such as Rennie's, Setlers, Gaviscon (not Gavilast) etc. up until the morning of the test.

If you are taking medication for chest pain only such as Nifedipine or Amlodipine, please discontinue them for two clear days unless absolutely necessary. **DO NOT stop this medication if it is prescribed for blood pressure.**

You should continue to take any other prescribed medication as normal

If the above poses a particular problem for you or you have any doubts about your medication or are unsure about which ones you can or cannot take please telephone the Unit on 01603 288281 for advice.

### Why do I need this test?

You will have recently attended for an outpatient appointment with problems associated with heartburn or chest pain, or swallowing problems, or a persistent cough, or perhaps nausea and vomiting.

These, and some other symptoms, can be associated with disorders of the oesophagus (gullet). Your Consultant has requested these tests so that he can establish what exactly is causing your particular problem. He/she can then offer the most appropriate treatment.

You may have had recent surgery for one of the above conditions; the tests are done to check on the efficacy of the surgery and also to establish the new 'normal' values for you.

### **What is 24hr ambulatory pH monitoring?**

You will have probably have already had a test done to look at the way your gullet muscles work. 24hr pH monitoring is a test that looks at the amount of stomach acid that leaks back (refluxes) from your stomach into the bottom part of your gullet. Everyone does this to some extent, but if the amount of acid reflux becomes excessive then heartburn, chest pain etc. can result. A small acid sensing catheter will be passed through your nose and into the lower part of your gullet. An anaesthetic spray can be used to numb your nose and throat for a few minutes whilst the catheter is passed.

Once the catheter is in place, it will be connected to a small data recorder that will measure the amount of acid reflux that occurs over the next 24hrs. Via some buttons on the box, you can tell us when you are eating, drinking, having symptoms etc. You will be aware of the catheter and may find it a little uncomfortable but it should not stop you eating and drinking or going about normal daily activities – indeed it is important that you try to do so. You will be given a sheet of instructions of how to use the box and the investigator will go through this with you before you leave. You can then go home. You will need to return the following day when the catheter will be removed and the data downloaded to a computer. The investigator will check through the recording and may need to confirm some timings with you.

### **What happens after my test?**

Once the catheter is removed the investigator may explain the basic findings to you **but will not offer you a diagnosis or treatment**. Your results will go back to your Consultant who will then call you back into clinic to discuss the diagnosis and treatment options. We do not send the results to your GP.

The test will not cause you any lasting after effects. If you drove yourself in, you should be able to drive home immediately afterwards. You should be able to eat and drink as usual.

**If you have any concerns or questions about these tests please telephone the Unit on 01603 288281. You should be able to speak directly to one of the investigators, or they will return your call as soon as they are able.**