



A guide to...

Having a urodynamics test

Urology Department
Watford General Hospital

If you need this leaflet in another language, large print, Braille or audio version, please call **01923 217 198** or email westherts.pals@nhs.net



Language



Large
Print



Braille



Audio

Introduction

This leaflet will 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.

The test will take place at Watford General Hospital. Parking facilities are available at the multi-storey car park; accessed from Thomas Sawyer Way.

What is a urodynamics test?

There are two ways of performing urodynamics; standard and video. It is a test to examine the function of the bladder; to show what happens to the bladder on filling and emptying.

Your doctor or nurse will only refer you for urodynamic studies if they feel the test is important in deciding how to manage your symptoms. Sometimes, the doctor who specialises in bladder problems and does the urodynamic testing, may feel that the test is not actually needed at this stage.

In this event, you will be able to use the scheduled test time for a detailed discussion of your bladder problems with this specialist.

Why should I have a urodynamics test?

What are the benefits

The test will try to 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?

Seven days before your test

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

Examples of such medicines are:

- Oxybutinin tablets (such as Ditropan) and patches (such as Kentara patches)
- Solifenacin
- Tolterodine
- Fesoterodine
- Mirabegron (Betmiga)
- Detrusitol
- Tamsulosin / Finasteride

If you are unsure of which medicines to stop, phone the department on **01923 217 052**. 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 medications you take for other conditions.

Please complete the bladder diary enclosed, over a of three day period. It does not need to be three days in a row.

We appreciate it is sometimes difficult to do this, but it is very important to do your best, it will give us valuable information about your bladder activity.

If you have not received a bladder diary with this leaflet, please contact **01923 217 052**.

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 running up to the test, take some laxatives (available from your pharmacy).

We ask you to come for the procedure with a comfortably full bladder. This allows us to:

- **measure your urinary flow rate** – before we carry out the urodynamic studies; this involves passing urine into a special machine; and
- **test a sample of your urine for infection using a dipstick** – if there is evidence of infection, we usually postpone your procedure for a week or two and give you a course of antibiotics to take home. You may be asked to leave a urine specimen with your GP a week before the test, and to let the urology team know the result before your next test.

If this is not possible, arrive early for the appointment and drink to fill your bladder prior to the test. If you have problems holding a full bladder we will understand.

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 a consultant may be 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, you either sit

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or stand in front of the toilet, the tubes are then connected to the machine which we use to slowly fill your bladder with fluid at a controlled rate.

Sometimes the fluid may be one that can be seen on X-ray depending on the reason you are having the test. 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 as you empty it.

For video urodynamics, we may ask you to lie still while the X-ray table is adjusted to the upright position. You may be asked to do a series of action for example cough, strain while X-rays are taken. The idea of the test is to see what happens to the bladder neck and demonstrate leaking.

Please do not be embarrassed, the cough test is important in terms of planning any future surgery. A further X-ray will be taken after the bladder is emptied.

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 do not worry or be embarrassed.

Will I feel any pain?

You may feel a little discomfort / stinging when we insert the bladder line due to the gel we use which acts as an anaesthetic, but this will pass off 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 doctor or nurse will then chat to you and if possible explain what the test shows.

Are there any risks associated with 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.
- Blood in urine
- Burning and discomfort on passing urine.

What do I need to do after I go home?

We advise you to drink plenty of fluids once you go home for 24-48 hours. You will be able to resume all your normal activities immediately after the test.

If you feel unwell, please seek immediate medical advice; see your GP or attend A&E.

Will I have a follow-up appointment?

We will send you a follow-up appointment to discuss your treatment.

West Hertfordshire Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust

Further Information

How to contact us

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