

The Women's Centre, John Radcliffe Hospital,
Oxford and the Horton Hospital, Banbury.

Urodynamics – a test to find the cause of bladder problems

Information for patients



Introduction

Your Consultant needs to know in more detail what is happening in and around your bladder, to find out what is causing you to have problems. We have arranged for you to have a test to help find out the cause of your bladder symptoms. This test is called 'Urodynamics'.

This leaflet answers some of the most commonly asked questions about this test. If you have any specific questions not covered by this leaflet, please contact the Specialist Nurses (please see page 6 for contact numbers).

What is Urodynamics?

This test is used to find out how your bladder behaves by measuring pressures within your bladder and urethra. The urethra is the tube through which urine passes out of the body.

The test may indicate the cause of symptoms such as incontinence, urgency or difficulty with emptying your bladder. The results will help your Consultant to decide on the best form of treatment for you. This may not mean surgery; many problems can be treated with tablets and special exercises.

Preparation for the test

Medicines

For 1 week before your Urodynamics test please stop taking any tablets or using patches you have been given for your **bladder** symptoms, such as oxybutinin (Ditropan, Lyrinel, Kentera patches), tolterodine (Detrusitol), fesoteradine (Toviaz) or solifenacin (Vesicare), unless you have been told otherwise by this clinic. Please continue to take tablets you have been given for blood pressure, heart problems, fluid around your ankles and any other medication you have been prescribed.

If you are not sure what your tablets are for, please check with your GP surgery or one of the specialist nurses before stopping any tablets.

Fluid chart

You will be sent a fluid input / output chart to fill in. It is very useful for us to know how much you drink and how often you pass urine. If you leak, we would also like to know how often this happens. We appreciate that it may be difficult for you to fill in this chart at work. If you are unable to measure urine at work just write down the time.

Please read the instructions on the chart and fill in the chart for at least 3 days. **Please bring the chart to clinic with you.**

Where will the test take place?

The test will take place either at the Diagnostic Suite in the Women's Centre at the John Radcliffe Hospital in Oxford or the Womens Day Surgery and Diagnostic Unit at the Horton Hospital in Banbury.

How long will the test take?

We make every effort to keep to time and you should expect to be at the hospital for about 1 hour.

What happens during the test?

Please arrive promptly for your appointment with a **comfortably full bladder**. If you cannot 'hold on' when you arrive at the department, please ask the receptionist to tell one of the clinic nurses.

We will explain the test to you and ask you to tell us briefly about your current symptoms. We will then ask you to undress from the waist down and pass urine into a special toilet – this is called a flow meter and simply measures how much urine you pass.

The nurse will then put 2 tubes in your bladder and one in your back passage. These will feel uncomfortable but should not be painful. The bladder tubes allow us to fill your bladder with clear fluid and measure the pressure within your bladder. The tube in your back passage allows us to measure the pressure in your abdomen whilst the bladder is filling.

These tubes are made of very thin plastic and contain a device to measure pressure inside and outside the bladder. This information is sent to a computer and you will be able to see what is happening on the computer screen if you wish to.

Your bladder will be filled slowly with clear fluid and we will ask you to tell us how your bladder is feeling, i.e. when you would normally want to go to the toilet. When your bladder feels full we will stop filling and remove one of the tubes in your bladder.

To find out how well your bladder behaves during physical activity we will ask you to give a series of coughs whilst you are

sitting on our special toilet. We may also ask you to stand up over an absorbent pad and give another series of coughs. We appreciate that patients may find this embarrassing. Please don't worry about this – it is a vital part of the procedure and helps us to make an accurate diagnosis.

Finally, we will ask you to pass urine again in our special toilet. The remaining tubes will be removed and you will be able to get dressed.

Getting the results

The nurse will explain the test results to you and answer any questions you might have. We may ask you to make another appointment at the reception desk to be seen in clinic again to discuss the results in more detail.

What happens after the test?

You can return to work or go straight home after the test and it is quite safe to drive.

Are there any risks?

Following Urodynamics a small number of patients may experience minor problems. The most common are:

- frequency, i.e. passing urine more often
- traces of blood in the urine
- a slight discomfort when passing urine

All these symptoms are temporary and should go away quite quickly. The nurse will talk to you about this before you leave the clinic.

What are the benefits?

This test allows your Consultant to make an accurate diagnosis of your condition. We will then be able to offer you the right treatment, which should help you to return to a more active and social lifestyle.

What if I have more questions or concerns?

Please remember that although the test sounds uncomfortable and embarrassing, you have overcome the most difficult part by telling the doctor about your problem. The Trust employs Specialist Nurses who are able to help you and talk to you about your problem. They can also answer any questions you may have about the test.

How to contact the Specialist Nurses

Specialist Nurses Beverly White and Tiana Howard can be contacted on **(01865) 222 767**.

Further information

Bladder & Bowel Foundation – Provides information and support for people affected by bladder and bowel problems.

Helpline: 0845 345 0165

www.bladderandbowelfoundation.org

The Cystitis and Overactive Bladder Foundation – Gives support to people with all forms of cystitis and overactive bladder.

Advice Line: 0121 702 0820

Website: www.cobfoundation.org

It is important to let us know if you need to change or cancel your appointment. You will find the telephone number for the appointments bureau on your letter. We will then be able to offer another patient your appointment slot.

If you need an interpreter or need a document in another language, large print, Braille or audio version, please call **01865 221473** or email **PALSJR@ouh.nhs.uk**

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