



University Hospitals Birmingham
NHS Foundation Trust



Urodynamic Studies

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What are urodynamic studies?

Urodynamic studies will show how well your bladder is working. The test indicates what is happening when the bladder is filling and emptying and can be helpful in assessing bladder problems and planning necessary treatment.

Types of urodynamics

Some urodynamic studies involve using X-rays during the test to show how the bladder is working, whilst others measure pressure only. Your consultant will have decided the appropriate test depending on your symptoms.

Preparation

No special preparation is required. Please eat and drink normally, take any of your usual medication (unless you have been advised otherwise) and attend the appointment with a comfortably full bladder.

Frequency Volume chart

A frequency volume chart is enclosed with this leaflet. Please complete this for approximately two to three days before your appointment and bring it along with you. This chart will give the doctors some idea of how often you go to the toilet to pass urine and how much urine you pass each time. If you wear a pad, please weigh them before you dispose of them and enter this on the chart.

However, if you are unable to complete the chart, this may prevent you from having the test.

Advice to female patients

Please notify us if:

- you could be pregnant, as you will not be able to undergo any test involving X-rays

If you are not comfortable speaking English, please bring an interpreter with you. If this is not possible, let us know so that an interpreter can be arranged.

The urodynamic test

You will be greeted by a member of staff and asked to change into a gown. The details of the test will be explained and you will be offered the opportunity to ask any questions.

The test can take between 30 - 90 minutes.

You will be asked to pass urine into a special machine called a flow rate, so that the strength and speed of your urinary flow can be measured. You will be asked to lie on a couch or special X-ray table. Local anaesthetic gel is then used to numb the urethra (the tube through which you pass urine) and two very fine tubes are passed into the bladder. One tube measures the bladder pressure and the other fills the bladder with fluid.

Another fine tube is passed into the rectum (back passage) so that the pressure in the abdomen can be measured as the bladder fills and empties.

Once the tubes are in place, they are attached to a computer that measures bladder activity.

The bladder is gradually filled and you will be asked to indicate when you first have the sensation to pass urine and again when you feel full. You will be asked to pass urine so that the speed and volume of urine can be measured.

Once the bladder is empty all the tubes are removed. The test is now finished. The results of your investigations and treatment plan will be discussed with you. Do feel free to ask any questions.

Are there any risks from urodynamics?

The main adverse effect of urodynamics is urinary infection which occurs in about 5% of patients* (the risk is slightly higher in patients who have suffered infections in the past). This can be reduced significantly by drinking plenty of fluids for 48 hours following the procedure.

*Almallah et al, Urinary tract infection and patient satisfaction after flexible cystoscopy and urodynamic evaluation. (The Golden Journal) 56:37–39, 2000

Are there any alternatives to urodynamics?

There are no alternative tests that will provide the same information as urodynamics about how your bladder is working.

Advice after urodynamics

You may see a small amount of blood in your urine for 24 – 48 hours. You may also experience a mild tingling and a stinging sensation in the urethra which may last for 24 hours. This is not unusual.

If you have any queries before or after this test please contact:

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