

Division of Women and Children

pH study

Information for parents

Introduction

This booklet has been provided to help answer some of the questions you or those who care for you may have. It is not meant to replace the consultation between you and your medical team, but aims to help you understand more about what you discussed together.

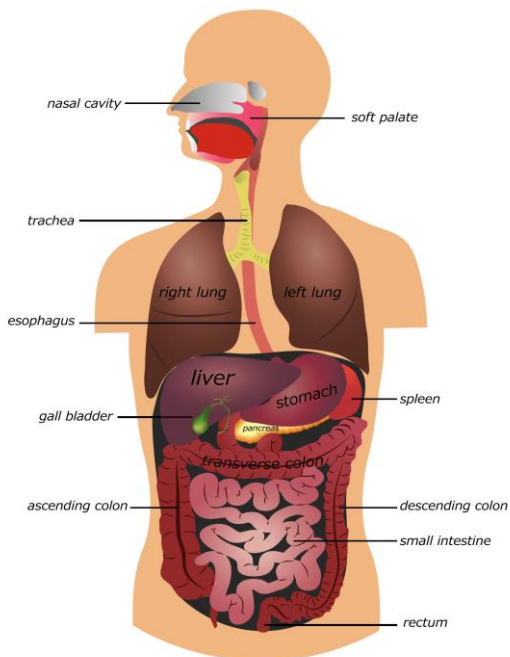
This leaflet explains the pH study test and what to expect when your child comes to St. Mary's Hospital to have one.

www.imperial.nhs.uk/paediatrics

What is a pH study?

A pH study is a test which measures gastro-oesophageal reflux, (GOR). GOR is when the stomach contents are brought back up into the oesophagus (gullet – the tube that takes food from the back of the mouth to the stomach).

It can occur for a number of reasons, including a weak valve at the top of the stomach. Repeated reflux of stomach acid may cause your child's gullet to become inflamed, which can be painful for them.



Why is it needed?

A pH study is needed to determine if your child has GOR, the severity of it and any appropriate treatment. Once the doctors know how serious your child's reflux is, they can suggest treatment.

What do I need to do?

The nurse will explain about the test in more detail, discuss any worries you may have and ask you to sign a consent form giving permission for your child to have the test. You will be asked if your child has any medical problems, particularly allergies.

If your child is on any medication please tell the nurse or doctors about these.

Domperidone and ranitidine need to be stopped 48 hours (2 days) before the test. Omeprazole or lansoprazole need to be stopped 72 hours (3 days) before the test. (Gaviscon is stopped on the day of the test).

What does the test involve?

You and your child will be taken to the Paediatric Short Stay Unit, where the test will start. You will be able to stay with your child throughout.

1. The test requires a narrow tube to be passed through your child's nostril and down the back of the throat into the oesophagus. A drink of water sometimes makes it easier for the end of the tube to travel to the oesophagus. Inserting the tube does not hurt, but it may be uncomfortable for a short while. This may be distressing for your child and may tickle their throat making them sneeze, cough, retch, and make their eye's water.

Please note that you may request to stop the procedure at any time if you have concerns.

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2. Once the tube has been inserted, the nurse will then tape it to your child's cheek and they will have an x-ray to check it is in the right place.
 3. The other end of the tube is connected to a recording box; which will stay in place for 24 hours to record your child's gastro-oesophageal reflux. During this time your child should eat and drink as usual, and you will need to fill in a diary. The person performing the test will explain how to do this.

Are there any risks?

The main risk with this test is that your child could have a nosebleed when the tube is inserted in the nostril. This tends to happen more with children who have nosebleeds anyway. There is a small risk that the tube could damage your child's gullet, but it is very unlikely as the tube is thin and flexible.

There is a small risk of aspiration (leaking) of stomach contents into the lungs during the insertion of the tube. **Therefore, please ensure that your child has nothing to eat or drink for a minimum of 2 hours prior to the procedure.**

Although the nurses carrying out the procedure are very experienced, there is a small risk of the tube going into the lung instead of the oesophagus. If this does occur, it is unlikely to cause any harm, as the position is confirmed on the x-ray.

Your child will not be allowed to eat or drink until the position is confirmed.

How do I make a comment about my treatment?

We aim to provide the best possible service and staff are happy to answer any questions you may have. If you were pleased with your care and want to write to let us know we would appreciate your time in doing so.

However, if your experience of our services does not meet your expectations and you would like to speak to someone other than staff caring for you, please contact the patient advice and liaison service (PALS) on **020 3313 0088** for Charing Cross, Hammersmith, and Queen Charlotte's and Chelsea Hospitals or **020 3312 7777** for St Mary's and Western Eye Hospitals or email pals@imperial.nhs.uk

Visit www.imperial.nhs.uk/pals for more information.

Alternatively, you may wish to express your concerns in writing to:

Chief Executive
Imperial College Healthcare NHS Trust
Trust Headquarters, The Bays,
South Wharf Road, London W2 1NY

Alternative formats

This leaflet can be provided on request in large print, as a sound recording, in Braille, or in alternative languages. Please contact the communications team on **020 3312 5592**.

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