

URODYNAMIC STUDIES

Information for patients

Important:

If you are taking one of the following medications for your bladder it is important that you stop them 5 days before the test (as they may interfere with the results). Failure to do so may lead to cancellation of the test.

Tolterodine (Detrusitol)
Trospium (Regurin)

Fesoterodine (Toviaz)
Solifenacin (Vesicare)

Oxybutynin

On rare occasions patients are asked to continue with their bladder tablets. If in doubt please check with Mr Hextall.

WHAT ARE URODYNAMIC STUDIES?

There are a number of different reasons why women develop problems with their bladder. Sometimes it is possible to find out what is wrong based on symptoms or examination findings, but quite often further investigations are required.

Urodynamics is a bladder test which is useful way of determining the cause of bladder symptoms such as urinary incontinence, frequency/urgency, recurrent cystitis or problems with emptying.

WHY IS THE TEST IMPORTANT?

Urodynamic studies help to properly diagnose bladder problems especially when there are a mixture of symptoms. This will ensure that you receive the most appropriate treatment.

WHERE DO THE TESTS TAKE PLACE?

You will be given an appointment to attend the Urodynamics Clinic in the Outpatient Department of either Spire Hospital Harpenden or Spire Hospital Bushey. On arrival at the hospital please register in the main outpatients.

WHAT DO I NEED TO DO BEFOREHAND?

It is important to try and drink a pint of fluid in the hour before your appointment so that you can attend with a reasonably full bladder. This will mean that you are able to pass urine at the start of the test. Please don't use the hospital toilet on arrival as we have a special lavatory for you to use.

WHAT HAPPENS ON THE DAY?

You will be seen by Mr Hextall or Jackie Walker (Urogynaecology Nurse specialist). You will be asked some questions about your symptoms and may be examined to assess any vaginal wall prolapse.

WHAT DOES THE URODYNAMIC TEST INVOLVE?

The first part of the test involves passing urine on a special toilet, which measures the flow and makes sure the bladder is emptying properly.

A fine catheter is then inserted through the water pipe into the bladder. This allows us to determine how much urine has been retained. A very small pressure measuring balloon is also put into the bottom (to measure the pressure on the outside of the bladder).

The bladder is then filled with sterile water so that the size of the bladder can be measured. It will also be possible to see if the bladder is overactive.

Most patients are asked to cough to check the supports and muscles underneath the bladder and occasionally ladies are asked to do some exercises, such as star jumps.

Finally, women are again asked to pass urine at the end of the test so that we can work out how well the bladder is squeezing.

WHAT HAPPENS AFTERWARDS?

You will be given the results of your bladder test. Treatment options may then be discussed or, alternatively, a follow up appointment will be arranged.

It is important to drink plenty of fluid for the rest of the day as this will reduce the risk of discomfort from the catheters and the chances of developing an infection.

There should be no problem returning to normal activities including work or driving immediately after the appointment.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Does the test hurt?

The test is not normally painful, although there is sometimes some slight discomfort from inserting a catheter. Urodynamic tests are slightly undignified but we do our best to make sure that patients do not feel embarrassed. The doctor or nurse performing the test specialises in this area and is, of course, there to help you get better.

Will the test give me an infection?

It is very rare for patients to develop a urine infection following Urodynamic studies, particularly if quite a lot of fluid is consumed afterwards. Some ladies will have slight stinging from the water pipe on passing urine for one to two days after the investigation. If this persists then there may be an infection and some antibiotics can be obtained, either from the hospital or your general practitioner (GP). Some patients are given antibiotics at the time of the test (e.g.) those with diabetes or difficulty emptying their bladder, although this is not necessary in the vast majority of cases.

How long does the test take?

The Urodynamic test itself takes around 10-15 minutes but you can expect to be with us for approximately 45 minutes so that we can give you time to change and explain the results, etc.

Will I have to pass urine in front of someone?

No. The doctor or nurse performing the test will leave the room when you pass urine.

Can I have the test if I am on a period?

Yes – but you will be asked to remove your tampon at the start of the investigation.

Any other questions?

Please don't hesitate to ask if you would like further information.

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