

Royal Brompton & Harefield



NHS Foundation Trust

Your oesophageal tests



This leaflet gives you information about your oesophageal tests. It is not intended to replace the explanations given to you by our staff, but we hope you will find it a helpful guide. Please ask if you have any questions or need any further information.

The Oesophagus

The oesophagus (gullet) is a muscular tube behind the throat, which links the mouth to the stomach. Swallowing causes a wave of pressure to move food down the oesophagus.

Oesophageal studies are a series of tests, which examine the oesophagus in detail. Most tests involve placing a thin tube through the nose into the oesophagus. We try to make these tests as comfortable as possible. The clinical physiologists (staff members) who perform the tests are experts who carry out these tests several times every week.

The Oesophageal Manometry test

Digestion starts in the stomach and then food is released into the small intestine. Between the oesophagus and the stomach is a 'valve' designed to prevent food and acid 'refluxing' or returning from the stomach into the oesophagus. This 'valve' should be strong enough to keep the contents of the stomach, particularly the stomach acids, inside the stomach.

Oesophageal manometry involves passing a tube through the nose into the oesophagus and then slowly withdrawing it as you are asked to swallow. The tube measures the different pressure changes within the oesophagus during swallowing.

The Oesophageal pH test

The test measures the level of acidity in the oesophagus. Everyone has some degree of reflux of acid from the stomach into the oesophagus.

Normally, this will clear quickly. If these acids stay in the oesophagus for longer periods than normal, problems may arise. You may feel pain or heartburn or the acid may cause ulceration and scar tissue may form (which can cause difficulties in swallowing).

Oesophageal pH testing can measure any excessive reflux of stomach acid (movement of acid from the stomach to the oesophagus). A small tube is passed into the nose and down into the oesophagus and left in place for about 24 hours. The tube is attached to a small lightweight digital recorder which you can carry with you. This will continuously record the amount of acid in your oesophagus. This procedure may feel a little uncomfortable, but it is not painful.

Before the test

It is important to note that this test result will be less meaningful if you take medication which alters the acid levels, such as Omeprazole (Losec) or Ranitidine (Zantec). You should try to stop taking these for about one week before the test, however you should continue to take any other prescription medication.

During the test

You should try to avoid smoking and also try to avoid eating or drinking large quantities of anything which is particularly acidic or alkaline. Please ask us for further details.

Please ensure that you do not attempt to have a bath or shower when the recorder is attached to you. There are electronic components inside it that will be damaged if they get wet.

You may want to go home after the tube has been passed into your oesophagus, but you will have to return the following morning to have the tube removed. Alternatively, you can stay overnight on Lind Ward (our short stay ward).

Cancellations

If you have difficulty in keeping your appointment, please contact us and we will be happy to rearrange your tests.

Tel: 020 7351 8910 (direct line) or

Tel: 020 7352 8121 ext. 4302

Fax: 020 7351 8080

How to find our Oesophageal Studies Unit / Lung Function Unit

Please see the enclosed map. We are located on the first floor of Fulham Wing / South Block. It can be reached by either lift or stairs.

If you have concerns about any aspect of the service you have received in hospital and feel unable to talk to those people responsible for your care, call PALS on 020 7349 7715 or e-mail pals@rbht.nhs.uk. This is a confidential service.

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إذا كنت ترغب بالحصول على ترجمة فورية لمضمون هذه الوثيقة الى اللغة العربية، يرجى منك الإتصال باحد مستخدمينا بجناح المصلحة أين يتم إستشفائك. أحد موظفينا سيسعى لترتيب إجراءات الترجمة وإتمامها في الوقت المناسب لك.

Brosürteki bilginin Türkçe tercümesi için tedavi görüyor olduğunuz bölüme bas vurunuz. Bölüm personeli tercümenin gerçekleşmesini en kısa zamanda ayaracaktır.

