

Patient information factsheet

Oesophageal manometry test

We have given you this factsheet because your doctor has referred you for an oesophageal manometry test. It explains what this test is and what it involves, so you know what to expect at your appointment. We hope this factsheet helps to answer some of the questions you may have. If you have any further questions or concerns, please contact us using the details at the end of this factsheet.

What is the oesophagus?

The oesophagus (also known as the food pipe) is a tube that connects your mouth to your stomach. The wall of your oesophagus contains nerves and muscles that squeeze together (contract) to help push food along to your stomach.

What is an oesophageal manometry test?

An oesophageal manometry test measures the pressure in your oesophagus as you swallow, allowing us to see how well the muscles and nerves in your oesophagus are working.

Why do I need this test?

You have been referred for this test because you have been having problems with swallowing or experiencing other symptoms, such as heartburn, regurgitation (bringing swallowed food and drink up again to your mouth) or chest pain.

This test can help us to determine the cause of your symptoms and decide on the best treatment for you.

Are there any risks?

An oesophageal manometry is a safe test, but as with all medical procedures, there are some risks. These include:

- a temporary nosebleed caused by the catheter (flexible tube) irritating the tissue inside your nose
- not being able to correctly place the catheter (if we cannot perform the test, we will need to go back to the doctor who referred you for the test)
- perforation (a tear) of your oesophagus (this is very rare)

We will explain all the risks to you in more detail when you come in for your test.

Are there any alternatives?

This test is the best way to find out what the muscles and nerves in your oesophagus are doing when you swallow.

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How should I prepare for the test?

Eating and drinking

You must not eat or drink anything for **four hours** before your test.

If you have diabetes, contact your diabetic nursing team for advice on how to manage your diabetes while fasting for this test.

Medication

Continue taking all your usual medications before your test (unless we have advised you otherwise).

Items to bring with you

On the day of your test, please bring the following items with you:

- a list of all the medications you are currently taking
- an inhaler for asthma or a spray for angina (if you have been prescribed either of these)
- if you suffer with dysphagia (difficulty swallowing), some of the food or drink that usually gets stuck in your oesophagus
- if you have any food allergies or specific dietary requirements, an allergen-free biscuit (for example, a gluten-free biscuit)

Who will perform the test?

The test will be performed by a specialist healthcare professional (a gastrointestinal (GI) physiologist or a clinical scientist).

What will happen before the test?

When you come into hospital for your test, we will first ask you some questions about the symptoms you have been experiencing. We will then explain the test to you and answer any questions you may have. If you are happy to proceed with the test, we will ask you to sign a consent form.

What will happen during the test?

We will perform the test in a treatment room in our GI physiology department.

We will ask you to lie down on a couch. We will then pass a thin catheter (flexible tube) through one of your nostrils, down your oesophagus and into your stomach. We will ask you to drink some water as we pass the catheter into your stomach to help it go down more easily. You may find this uncomfortable, but it should not be painful. The sensation may also make you sneeze, cough or gag. This is normal.

This test can only be performed when you are fully awake, so we will not give you a sedative (a medicine that makes you feel sleepy and relaxes you), but we can give you some local anaesthetic spray to numb the back of your throat if needed.

When the catheter is in the correct position, we will gently tape it to your cheek to prevent it from moving. You will be able to breathe, eat, drink and talk normally with the catheter in place. We will then ask you to swallow small quantities of water and some solid food, such as a biscuit. The catheter has special pressure sensors on it that will record how well the nerves and muscles in your oesophagus are working as you drink and eat and will send this information to a computer.

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Once the test is finished, we will gently remove the catheter.

How long will the test take?

The test itself usually takes about 20 minutes, but please expect to be in our department for up to one hour in total.

What will happen after the test?

You will be able to return to your usual daily activities immediately after the test.

You will be able to eat and drink as normal after the test (unless we numbed the back of your throat with a local anaesthetic spray, in which case, you must not eat or drink anything hot for one hour after the test).

Are there any side effects?

After the test, some people may experience:

- a mild sore throat
- a nosebleed
- a runny nose
- a hoarse voice (when your voice sounds breathy, raspy, or strained)

These are all temporary side effects and should settle within 24 hours.

If you have any concerns after your test, contact us for advice using the details at the end of this factsheet. Outside of our working hours, contact NHS **111** for clinical advice.

When will I receive my results?

We will analyse the data from your test and then send a report with our findings to the doctor who referred you for this test. Depending on the findings, your doctor will either write to you or invite you to a clinic appointment to discuss your results.

Contact us

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact us.

Gastrointestinal (GI) physiology department
Telephone: **023 8120 4132** (Monday to Friday, 8am to 4pm)

Useful links

www.nhs.uk/conditions/swallowing-problems-dysphagia
www.nhs.uk/conditions/achalasia

If you are a patient at one of our hospitals and need this document translated, or in another format such as easy read, large print, Braille or audio, please telephone **0800 484 0135** or email **patientsuppothub@uhs.nhs.uk**

For help preparing for your visit, arranging an interpreter or accessing the hospital, please visit **www.uhs.nhs.uk/additionalsupport**