

patient education program

8200 Dodge Street Omaha, NE 68114-4113 402-955-5400 ChildrensOmaha.org

Breath Hydrogen Test

What is a Breath Hydrogen test?:

Three major sugars we use in our daily diet are:

Lactose from milk

Sucrose from sweets

Fructose from fruits and sweets

Some people cannot digest or absorb these sugars and may develop stomach bloating, diarrhea and/or abdominal pain. We can use a Breath Hydrogen test to check for this problem. These tests measure how much hydrogen is in the breath after drinking a small dose of liquid sugar.

How to prepare for the test:

No antibiotics for 4 weeks before the test.

One week before the test, stop any laxatives or stool softeners (like Colace®, Milk of Magnesia®, Ex-Lax®, Miralax®) or stool bulking agents (like Metamucil® or Citrucel®). Do not have any test done that needs a bowel clean-out like a colonoscopy or barium enema.

The day before the test:

These are the ONLY foods your child can eat:

Plain white bread, plain white rice, baked or broiled chicken, turkey or fish, water, chicken broth, beef broth, eggs and black coffee or plain tea. Do not eat or drink anything else—it could give the wrong test result.

- a) The night before the test, eat an early dinner of rice and any meat listed above. No other foods are allowed.
- b) You can only use salt and pepper to flavor food. No butter or margarine.
- c) No soda.

12 hours before the test:

1. Stop eating and drinking 12 hours before the test.
2. Prescription medications are okay to take until 12 hours before the test. No probiotics, antibiotics, laxatives, or stool softeners.

The day of the test:

1. Nothing to eat or drink in the morning except plain water.
2. Take medications with a small sip of water. If patient is diabetic, you must talk with their diabetes doctor about medications. They may need to change the dose of insulin or other medications.
3. Do not brush teeth within 2 hours of the test.
4. Do not eat, drink, chew gum or tobacco, smoke cigarettes, or eat breath mints/candy before or during the test. **No exposure to second hand smoke for at least 1 hour before the test. (Children should never be exposed to second hand smoke.)**
5. Do not sleep or exercise during the test.
6. Please check in at the Access Center in the Main Hospital lobby.

The test will take 3-4 hours.