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Urodynamic Testing

What is Urodynamic Testing?

Your doctor has recommended the urodynamics test to have a better understanding of how urine is stored and expelled by your lower urinary tract system.

The bladder is a balloon like organ with a muscular wall that expands and contracts. Urine travels from the kidneys to the bladder through tubes called ureters. Urine is stored in the bladder until you decide to empty it. Emptying occurs by a contraction of the bladder muscle. This means that the bladder muscle “squeezes” to empty the urine.

The sphincter (SFINK-ter) sits right below the bladder and is around the urethra (yer-WREATH-rah). The urethra opens to the outside of your body, where urine is expelled. If you are not ready to empty your bladder, then the sphincter muscles tightens up, like a knot at the bottom of a water balloon. When you decide that it is time to empty your bladder, the sphincter muscle relaxes (like untying the balloon) and urination starts.

Urination takes place only when the muscles and nerves are working correctly. Messages are constantly being exchanged between the bladder and brain through a pathway of nerves. There are many reasons why a person may have difficulty in controlling or initiating their urinary flow. They need testing, called urodynamics, to determine how well the muscles are working.

If you are taking any of these medications listed below, please stop them 2 days before the urodynamics test:

Detrol LA	Ditropan XL or Oxybutin
Vesicare	Sanctura
Enablex	Oxytrol

You must have a full bladder in order for the test to be performed. Please drink at least 1-2 glasses of water before arriving for the appointment.

How is it done?

The urodynamics testing takes about 45 minutes. It may be done in our office or in the hospital, depending on what your insurance requires. There are no dietary restrictions before the test, unless other instructions have been given.

You will be asked to empty your bladder into a special commode. One small tube called a catheter will be inserted into your bladder. It will be used to fill your bladder with water and measure the changes in bladder pressure as it fills and empties. A very small tube will be inserted into your rectum, which will measure the pressures in your abdomen when you strain or cough. Two patches or tiny electrodes similar to an EKG test, will be placed near your



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rectum. These will monitor the sphincter muscle and its ability to work properly when you urinate. Any discomfort you may feel during the process will go away within a short time following the test.

As your bladder is filled with fluid from the catheter, you will be asked to describe how your bladder feels. You may be asked to strain or cough several times. When your bladder is full, you will empty it. The nurse will explain everything to you as the test is being done.

The catheters are removed once the test is over. You may have a little discomfort where the catheters were placed. This will go away rapidly. You will also be given a medication that acts to relieve these symptoms and will color your urine a reddish brown or blue color the first time you urinate. Drinking adequate amounts of fluids (usually 8-10 glasses) is especially important within 24 hours after the testing. This will help to prevent a urinary tract infection. You may continue your normal diet, medications and activities after the testing.