

Urodynamic investigations

What are urodynamics?

Urodynamics are a series of investigations, which investigate how the bladder and lower urinary tract function. The tests involve filling the bladder through a catheter and trying to provoke leakage, whilst measuring the pressure around the bladder. The test also looks at how well the bladder empties during urination.

The tests allow accurate assessment of how the bladder works and gives important information in urinary incontinence and prolapse.

The test can be performed at any time including during a period.

What do the tests involve?

The first part of the test involves sitting on a special toilet and emptying the bladder in the normal manner. The toilet is behind screens so that this can be done in private. This measures how quickly and how much urine you are able to pass

This requires a comfortably full bladder when attending for the test.

The test then involves being examined. At this time a small catheter is placed in the bladder and a small pressure transducer in the back passage. These lines allow the bladder to be filled whilst a computer analyses pressure changes in the bladder.

When the bladder is full (this normally takes about 5 minutes) a few minutes are spent assessing leakage with manoeuvres such as coughing. During this time some X-ray examinations may be undertaken.

Finally the bladder is emptied out.

Depending on why the tests are being performed a small further procedure may be performed investigating the pressures in the urethra.

After the test

A normal fluid intake is 1200-1500 mls per day (50-60 fl oz) per day. After the test it is better to drink a little more than this as there may be some slight smarting from where the catheter was placed. About 1 in 200 women develop cystitis after this investigation.

Who performs the test?

The test performed by Mr Toozs-Hobson a consultant Gynaecologist with an interest specifically in bladder problems. A result is sent to the referring Doctor the day after the investigation. Some information may be available at the end of the test.

Where are the tests performed?

The tests are usually performed at the Birmingham Nuffield Hospital 22 Somerset Road, Edgbaston.

If you require further information about the test please contact Mrs Edna Neale in the Radiology department at the Nuffield hospital (0121 567 2000) or Mr Toozs-Hobson's secretary.

PLEASE REMEMBER TO ATTEND THE APPOINTMENT WITH A COMFORTABLY FULL BLADDER.