

Hydrogen Breath Test Preparation Instructions for SIBO (Small Intestinal Bacterial Overgrowth)

The hydrogen breath test is used to look for excessive small intestinal bacteria in your intestine. This testing is safe, easy to perform, but may take up to 3 hours to complete.

When bacteria in the small intestine are present in larger than normal levels it is referred to as **small intestinal bacterial overgrowth**. Many bacteria live in the colon (large intestine), however, not too many are usually present in the small intestine due to stomach acid entering from the stomach and the constant pushing of food through the small intestine. Intestinal overgrowth can lead to increased breakdown of food, trouble absorbing nutrients, and inflammation, which can cause symptoms such as abdominal discomfort, diarrhea, bloating, and weight loss.

To test for this condition, you will be given a prescription for Lactulose. Lactulose is a sugar that will be broken down by bacteria in the small intestine causing hydrogen (gas) to be released. The hydrogen level will be measured in your breath.

TEST PREPARATION:

- **Four (4) weeks prior** to the test you should not take antibiotics.
- **One (1) week prior** to the test you should not take any laxatives or stool softeners (ex. Colace, Ex-Lax, Milk of Magnesia), stool bulking agents (ex: Citrucel, Metamucil) or probiotics. All bowel tests requiring cleansing, such as a barium enema or colonoscopy, should not be done within a week of your breath test.
- **The evening prior** to your test you may eat only: plain white rice, salad with lettuce and dressing only, any type of meat or fowl, jello, water, non-flavored black coffee or tea, ice cream. Do **not** eat potatoes, vegetables (other than lettuce) breads, pasta, pastry or fruits. Salt may be used to flavor food. Margarine and butter are not permitted. Soft drinks (soda, pop) are not allowed. **EATING OR DRINKING ANYTHING ELSE** may give false results (specifically candy, beans, high fiber foods, fiber cereals, pasta). Have an early dinner the night before your test consisting of meat and rice.
- **Twelve (12) hours prior** to your test you **MUST** stop eating and drinking. Prescriptions medications may be taken with water 12 hours before your test.
- Do not eat or drink anything the **morning of your test**. If you are a diabetic, - consult with your provider about insulin or hypoglycemic medications.
- You must **not** chew gum or tobacco, smoke tobacco, eat, drink, or use candy or breath mints before or during your test. You must brush your teeth and tongue and use mouthwash **two (2) hours prior** to your test. Do not swallow the mouthwash.
- You may not sleep or exercise while the test is being performed.
- Fill the prescription for the Lactulose and bring it to your appointment.

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DAY OF TEST:

For the bacterial overgrowth (SIBO) test, be prepared to be in the office for up to 3 hours. Bring something to do (a book to read, etc.) to help pass the time. A breath sample will be taken prior to ingestion of the lactulose. Breaths will then be taken every 15 minutes thereafter for up to 3 hours after ingestion of the Lactulose/Enulose.

Once the test is completed you may resume your normal diet and activity. The test results will be given to your provider for interpretation. You will receive your results and recommendations after they are reviewed by your provider. A positive test will be treated with antibiotics. Please make sure the office has the correct pharmacy information in your profile as all prescriptions are sent electronically.

******* Any questions please call (585) 720-1550. *******