# C14 Urea Breath Test (Helicobacter pylori) Patient Guide

The C14 Urea Breath Test is used to detect the presence of Helicobacter pylori, a bacterium that can infect the stomach and cause conditions such as gastritis and stomach ulcers. The test may also be used after treatment to confirm that eradication therapy has been successful.

### How the test works

After swallowing a capsule containing urea, the test measures carbon dioxide in your breath. Helicobacter pylori produces an enzyme called urease, which breaks down urea and produces carbon dioxide that can be detected in your breath.

### Test safety information

The capsule used in this test contains urea tagged with a very small amount of radioactive carbon (C14). The radiation exposure from this test is less than the natural background radiation received in daily life.

- The test is considered safe for adults, children, and during pregnancy
- The test capsule is Halal certified
- If you or your guardian have any concerns, please discuss them with your referring doctor before the test

### Before your test (How to prepare)

The test takes approximately 15 minutes and no appointment is required. Correct preparation is essential for accurate results.

### Medication restrictions

- Stop all antibiotics and bismuth-containing products (e.g. De-Nol, Helidac) at least 4 weeks before the test
- Stop cytoprotective medications (e.g. Carafate, Sucralfate, Ulcyte) at least 2 weeks before the test
- Stop proton pump inhibitors (PPIs) at least 1 week before the test (e.g. omeprazole, pantoprazole, esomeprazole, rabeprazole)
- Stop antacids and H2 antagonists during the fasting period

If you have taken any of the above medications or are unsure whether you should proceed, please consult your referring doctor. The test may need to be postponed.

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## Food, drink, and smoking restrictions

- **Fast for a minimum of 4 hours before the test** (6 hours or overnight is recommended)
- **DO NOT** eat or drink anything during the fasting period, including water, tea, or coffee
- **DO NOT** smoke for at least 8 hours before the test
- **DO NOT** brush your teeth before the test

## Special circumstances

- If you are pregnant or breastfeeding, please discuss the test with your referring doctor
- Children may have the test only if they are able to swallow the capsule
- If a child cannot swallow the capsule, do **NOT** open it, refer the patient back to the referring doctor

## If something goes wrong

If you are unable to follow the preparation instructions or feel unwell on the day of the test, please inform the collection staff before proceeding.

## After the test

You may resume normal eating, drinking, and medications unless otherwise advised. Results will be sent to your referring doctor, who will discuss them with you.

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