



Bravo Esophageal pH Test

The Bravo Esophageal pH Test is a specialized procedure to measure your esophagus's pH or acidity level. This test is a helpful diagnostic tool often recommended to patients experiencing gastroesophageal reflux disease (GERD) symptoms. GERD is characterized by frequent heartburn, chest pain, persistent coughing, and a sore throat or hoarse voice. These symptoms are often the result of stomach acid frequently backing up into the esophagus, causing discomfort and potentially leading to more serious health complications over time.

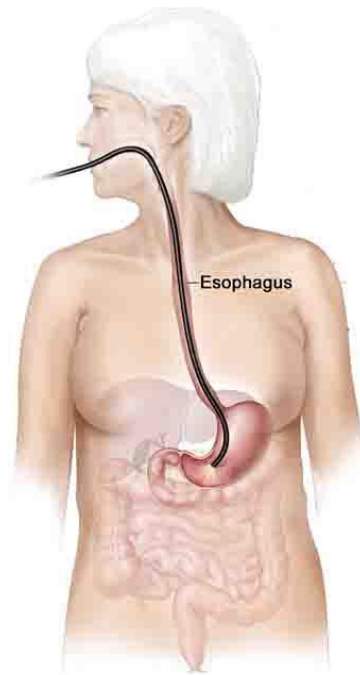
Wireless Capsule

The core component of the Bravo pH test is an amazing miniaturized, wireless “vitamin-sized” capsule that is temporarily attached to the wall of your lower esophagus during an upper endoscopy “scope” exam (gastroscopy). The sensor in the capsule sends information to a small receiver that you wear around your waist. The capsule measures the pH levels (acid) in your esophagus and transmits these readings to a receiver you wear on your belt or waistband. The device continually measures acid levels in your esophagus for up to 96 hours. In this way, your doctor can better understand if your symptoms are due to acid reflux.

Preparation

You must take several important preparatory steps before you undergo the Bravo pH test. Your doctor will provide specific instructions about which medications to stop taking before the test. This is crucial because certain medications can affect the accuracy of the test results. Let your doctor know if you have a pacemaker or implantable heart defibrillator, a history of bleeding problems, dilated blood vessels, and any other previously known problems with your esophagus. There is a small amount of nickel in the capsule. Tell the nurse if you are allergic to nickel.

- **Seven days** before the monitoring period, don't take proton pump inhibitors such as omeprazole (Prilosec®), lansoprazole (Prevacid®), rabeprazole (Aciphex®), pantoprazole (Protonix®), esomeprazole (Nexium®).



Two days (48 hours) before the monitoring period, don't take the H2 blockers (cimetidine (Tagamet®), famotidine (Pepcid®, Zantac®),), nizatidine (Axid®); or the promotility drug, metoclopramide (Reglan®).

• **Six hours** before the monitoring period, don't take antacids (such as Alka-Seltzer® Gaviscon®, Maalox®, Milk of Magnesia®, Mylanta®, Phillips®, Tums® or any other brands).

• Don't eat or drink anything 4-6 hours before your appointment.

It's also important to note that you should not eat or drink anything for six hours before your appointment. However, your doctor may occasionally want you to continue taking a particular medication during the monitoring period to determine its effectiveness. Always follow your doctor's specific instructions regarding medication use. Please inform the doctor if you are allergic to any medications or if you chronically use Marijuana or take narcotic painkillers.

Test Day

What To Wear

You will have to change into a patient gown before the examination. You should wear loose, comfortable, casual, easily removed, and folded clothing. Avoid tight-fitting garments. Please leave your jewelry, valuables, and high heels at home.

Transportation

To prevent any discomfort, you will receive intravenous sedation before the procedure. As this medication will make you drowsy for several hours, you cannot safely drive a car for the remainder of the day. Therefore, a family member or friend must accompany you to the office to drive you home. You should choose someone with whom the doctor can freely discuss your test results. We request that your companion arrive with you and remain in the office during the entire time of the test. Otherwise, the examination may be canceled. You must arrive at least 60 minutes before your procedure time and plan to stay approximately two hours.

Your Permission

If you have any questions or concerns about this test, do not hesitate to ask your doctor about them. You will be asked to sign a written consent form - or permit - before the test begins to signify that you completely understand what this test involves.

Placing the Bravo Capsule

You will be given intravenous MAC anesthesia. These medications will make you drowsy and relaxed, thus preventing any discomfort during the examination. Most patients fall into

“twilight sleep” during the examination. Furthermore, rest assured that these medications will not prompt you to act or speak foolishly during the test.

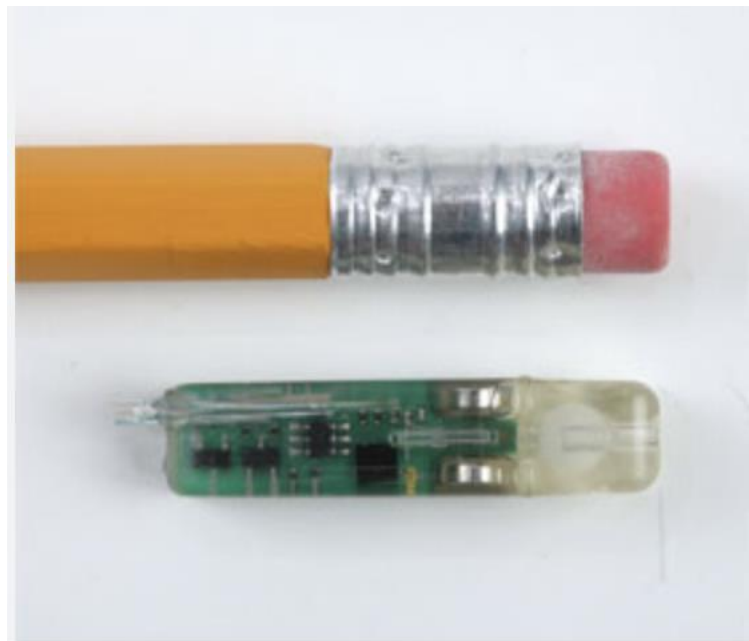
A small mouthpiece will then be placed between your teeth, enabling you to relax your jaws. Once you are in a light sleep, the doctor will gently insert the thin, flexible gastroscop. Since this scope does not enter your windpipe, it will not interfere with your ability to breathe. The most frequent fear expressed by patients is that they will be unable to swallow the scope because of gagging. Fortunately, the medications given before the procedure usually prevent this from happening. Even the most apprehensive patients tolerate the procedure quite well.

To better see the lining of your upper digestive tract, your stomach is gently filled with a small amount of air. While this air may cause the sensation of abdominal fullness, it should not be painful. Your doctor can now begin to inspect the lining of your esophagus, stomach, and duodenum, an exam that takes about twenty minutes.

Once the endoscopic inspection is completed, the small Bravo capsule is attached to the inner wall of your lower esophagus by simple suction. For several days, this amazing device constantly monitors and records the acid level in the lower esophagus. This receiver has several buttons that you will press to record symptoms of GERD, such as heartburn. In addition to recording symptoms, you will be asked to maintain a diary during testing. This diary will keep track of events like when you start and stop eating and drinking when you lie down, and when you get back up. These details can provide valuable context to the pH readings, helping your healthcare provider better understand your symptoms and their triggers.

After the Test

Upon awakening, you will probably have little recollection of the procedure itself. After an outpatient gastroscopy, you will be asked to rest in the recovery room for a while. Your companion will be asked to sit with you while the effects of the sedative begin to wear off. Once you are more alert, the doctor will meet with you and your companion to discuss the findings and any needed treatment.



You will then be able to return home with your companion’s assistance. However, since you will still be somewhat drowsy and uncoordinated, you will be taken by office personnel directly to your car in a wheelchair. You must go directly home; do not stop to eat along the way. Although you may resume a regular

diet at home, you should eat lightly at first and then gradually increase your intake of foods as tolerated. Since air was placed in the stomach during the examination, you may experience the discomfort of mild gas pains for several hours until the gas is expelled.

Once awake, you may resume your normal diet and medications. You can also resume your normal activities – such as swallowing, eating, and drinking. This will cause the disposable pH capsule to detach and pass through the digestive tract in seven to 10 days on average.

Because of the sedation's lingering effects, you should not drive, operate any machinery, drink alcohol, make any important business decisions, or engage in any vigorous physical activity for the remainder of the day. If any specimens or polyps were extracted during the examination, the doctor will contact you and your physician when the laboratory results become available. Further treatment or tests, if necessary, will be discussed at that time.

What risks are involved?

Finding out if you have acid reflux is important. If you do have the more severe version (GERD), it could be causing damage to your esophagus, which could mean you could develop more serious problems. These include Barrett's esophagus or esophageal cancer. Finding out that you don't have acid reflux is also important. Many people are taking medication like PPIs that aren't working. You don't need to take medication that is not indicated. If you don't have acid reflux, your healthcare team can help you determine what is causing your symptoms.

Any procedure has risks, but the Bravo test has few complications. These have included problems with the equipment that makes the results unreliable. The capsule might fail to stay in place for the entire testing period, or it might not detach when it's supposed to do so. About 5% of people having this test might feel discomfort when swallowing, chest pain, or back pain. This may last several weeks. You may have a sore throat from the endoscopy for a day or so.

What happens to the Capsule?

The capsule usually detaches in a 7-10 days and passes harmlessly in your stool. You will probably not see it pass. To be safe, we advise against any MRI examinations examination for three months after the test.

Results of the Examination

The pH record from the device will be downloaded onto a computer and then analyzed by your doctor. This process may take several weeks. When we receive the final report, we will contact you with recommendations.

The Bravo Esophageal pH Test is a helpful tool in diagnosing and managing GERD. If you're experiencing persistent symptoms such as frequent heartburn, chest pain, coughing, or a sore throat, speak with your healthcare provider to see if this test might be right for you.

Center For Digestive Health & Nutrition

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The Center for Digestive Health & Nutrition is a private medical practice comprised of experienced Gastroenterologists, Nurse Practitioners, and staff members dedicated to preventing and treating digestive disorders. Our physicians have been serving the needs of those in Western Pennsylvania and surrounding areas since 1977, having cared for tens of thousands of individuals with digestive problems. Our mission is to deliver high-quality gastroenterology services efficiently and cost-consciously. We realize the very sensitive nature of GI illness and understand the necessity to provide our services in an environment that stresses patient privacy and confidentiality and where patient satisfaction is the goal. Appointments can be conveniently scheduled online via our website above. Learn more about digestive issues on Instagram @thedigestivetract

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