What Is The Treatment?

• There is not just one medication that cures *H. pylori*. Typically a multi-drug regimen is prescribed for 10-14 days.

• Treatment is often comprised of two antibiotics with a proton pump inhibitor (a medication to reduce stomach acid and allow any damaged lining to heal).

• *H. pylori* can sometimes be resistant to antibiotics so it is important to take all medications as prescribed and to completion.

• About 20% of patients may not be cured with one round of medication and may require additional treatment.

• Testing for eradication of *H. pylori* can be performed at least four weeks following treatment via breath test, stool test, or endoscopy with biopsy.

• Successful treatment of *H. pylori* prevents ulcer recurrence and reduces risk of ulcer complications.

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Patient Instructions For *H. pylori* Breath Testing

- Medications known as proton pump inhibitors (Aciphex, Dexilant, Nexium, Prevacid, Prilosec, Protonix, Rabeprazole, Esomeprazole, Lansoprazole, Omeprazole, Pantoprazole) can decrease accuracy of breath testing

  ➡ Two weeks prior to testing - Do not take any proton pump inhibitor, bismuth product or carafate. TUMS are OK

  ➡ Two weeks prior to testing - Do not take any antibiotics

  ➡ Two hours prior to testing - Do not eat or drink anything.

  ➡ One hour prior to testing - Do not smoke

- Testing will take 25 minutes

- A baseline breath sample will be captured by breathing into a small collection bag

- You will be asked to drink a solution containing phenylalanine (equivalent to the amount of sweetener in one diet soda)

- After 15 minutes, a final breath sample is collected

- If you are pregnant, consult with your ob/gyn prior to testing

- Results available in around one week
What Is Helicobacter Pylori?

- Helicobacter pylori, or *H. pylori*, is a bacteria found in the stomach or the first part of the small intestine.
- Approximately 50% of the world population is affected.
- Many people with *H. pylori* have no symptoms and can harbor the bacteria for years without incident.
- *H. pylori* can cause digestive complaints and is the most common cause of peptic ulcer disease.
- In rare instances *H. pylori* may also cause stomach cancer.

How Do I Get *H. pylori*?

- *H. pylori* enters the body via the mouth then moves through the digestive system, infecting the stomach or small intestine.
- While the exact mode of transmission is not known, *H. pylori* likely is contracted through person-to-person contact.
- *H. pylori* may be spread by consuming food or water contaminated by feces.
- *H. pylori* is more common in developing countries with untreated water, crowded living conditions, and poor sanitation.

H. pylori Infection

- *H. pylori* makes its home within the mucosal layer of the stomach or small intestine
- The body reacts to this invasion and inflammation develops
- The protective mucosal layer weakens, making it susceptible to damage from stomach acid

What Are The Symptoms?

Most people with *H. pylori* have no symptoms

- Symptoms develop when complications from *H. pylori* occur
- *H. pylori* infection contributes to:
  - Gastritis (stomach inflammation)
  - Dyspepsia (heartburn, bloating, nausea)
  - Over 80% of stomach ulcers
  - Over 90% of duodenal (small intestine) ulcers
- *H. pylori* infection symptoms may include:
  - Abdominal Pain
  - Heartburn
  - Nausea
  - Vomiting

H. pylori and Cancer

Chronic infection with *H. pylori* has been linked to stomach cancer and gastric mucosa-associated lymphoid tissue (MALT) lymphoma.

Lifetime risk for stomach cancer is 1-2% and less than 1% for lymphoma of the stomach.

Stomach cancer is less common in the U.S. and more common in Asia and South America.

It is important to treat *H. pylori* when identified to lower the risk of cancer.

Who Should Get Tested?

- Anyone with an ulcer or history of ulcer disease should get tested for *H. pylori*
- Anyone with symptoms of dyspepsia (heartburn, bloating, nausea)
- Family history of stomach cancer or personal history of stomach cancer

There Are Four Methods To Diagnose *H. pylori*

1) **Endoscopy** - visual exam of the upper gastrointestinal tract while under sedation. Biopsies are taken to test for *H. pylori*.
2) **H. pylori Breath Test** - after drinking a specialized solution that is broken down by *H. pylori*, a breath sample is collected to measure levels of carbon dioxide exhaled.
3) **Bloodwork** - detects antibodies to the bacteria. This does not distinguish active from previously treated infections.
4) **Stool Test** - measures a protein (antigen) associated with *H. pylori*.

FACT:

*H. pylori* is the most common chronic bacterial infection seen in humans worldwide