

What is Bacterial Overgrowth and Why Am I Having a Breath Test?

Your doctor or medical provider is suspecting that you may have excess amounts of bacteria in the lumen of your small intestine a condition referred to as Small Intestinal Bacterial Overgrowth Syndrome or SIBO. This is not an infection but SIBO may cause bothersome symptoms that your doctor or medical provider may be able to treat if the diagnosis is confirmed with a specialized noninvasive breath test.

Normally, there is a low bacterial count in the small intestine due to the acidic environment of the stomach, which kills most bacteria and the active motility and immunity of the small intestine, which regularly clears bacteria from the small intestine. If these protective mechanisms become deficient for one reason or another, the concentration of bacteria in the small intestine increases leading to SIBO and its associated symptoms of abdominal pain, cramping, bloating, and irregularities in bowel habits. It also may destroy vitamins and interfere with the absorption of nutrients.

Lactulose Breath Test for Bacterial Overgrowth:

This is a simple noninvasive but time consuming test that takes up to 3 ½ hours. You will be giving breath samples every 15 minutes by exhaling into a collection bag. First, a baseline breath sample is taken then you will drink a glass of water with a non-absorbed sugar called Lactulose. During the test you may develop symptoms of abdominal pain, bloating

or diarrhea which usually subside in a few hours.

Preparation:

- The breath test **MUST** be done **before or at least 8 weeks** after any colonoscopy or barium enema X-ray.
- For **4 week** before the test, you **MUST** not take any antibiotics.
- For **7 days** before the test, you **MUST** not take any motility medication (Reglan or Domperidone) and no stool softeners, laxatives, Fiber supplements such as Metamucil, Benefiber, Citrucel, Colace, Milk of Magnesia, or Ex-lax.
- If you are a diabetic, please consult your doctor or medical provider with respect to your diabetic medication as you would be fasting for the test. All other medication may be taken with just enough water to swallow the pills.

Two Days before the test:

- Start a low fiber no dairy diet by not eating any fibrous foods such as salads, beans, vegetables, fruits, whole wheat bread, bran, popcorn, corn, nuts, dairy products, sorbitol containing products and supplements, and all foods containing artificial sweeteners including diet drinks. You may eat cooked vegetables except broccoli and beans. (See sample menu on reverse side).

The Night Before the Test:

- If you are a diabetic, please follow your doctor's or medical provider's advice on whether to stop or reduce your diabetic medication as you would be fasting for the test. All other medication may be taken with just enough water to swallow the pills.
- **DO** eat a light meal before 8pm which may include beef, fish, skinless poultry, or white rice.
- You should have nothing to eat or drink for twelve hours prior to your test except plain unflavored water.

The Morning of the Test:

- If you are a diabetic, please follow your doctor's or medical provider's advice on whether to stop or reduce your diabetic medication as you would be fasting for the duration of the test. All other **prescription** medication may be taken with just enough water to swallow the pills. Do not take any vitamins, supplements, probiotics, or herbal medication.
- Before the test, brush your teeth 2 times and rinse thoroughly with mouth wash.
- **DO NOT** drink anything including water, chew gum, suck on mints or candy, sleep, exercise or use tobacco products for at least **one hour** before **OR** during the test.

After the Test:

- You may return to your usual diet and activity and resume your usual medication after all breath sample collections are completed.
- A report with the results will be sent to your ordering doctor or medical provider who will explain your test results.

Sample Low Fiber Menu

Breakfast - 1 egg cooked anyway you like, 1 slice bacon, 1 slice of low fiber white toast with butter or jelly - **not jam**. Coffee/tea with a non dairy creamer (no artificial sweeteners), cranberry juice or no pulp orange juice.

Snack - Plain Jell-O not the diet type - no fruits, vegetables or whipped cream.

Lunch - Bouillon, chicken or tuna fish (mayonnaise is okay) (hamburg, chicken pork, fish), with or without 1 slice of a refined, low fiber white bread. Coffee/tea with non dairy creamer and no artificial sweeteners.

Snack - Plain sherbert or non-diet Jell-O.

Supper - Steak (hamburg, chicken pork, fish) with broth gravy, white rice with seasoning and canned cooked carrots.

Snack - Frozen yogurt not the diet type.



Bacterial Overgrowth Breath Test

Connecticut Gastroenterology Institute
Bristol Hospital
41 Brewster Road, Bristol, CT 06010

To Schedule the procedure call Bristol Hospital
Centralized Scheduling at
(860)585-3020

Your Procedure date/time:

For more information or to reschedule or cancel your appointment, please call the breath testing Center at (860)585-3838.