
ILLINOIS GASTROENTEROLOGY INSTITUTE

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24 hour pH Monitoring

Your doctor has recommended this test because of your symptoms, which may be a sign of acid reflux disease. With acid reflux disease, the acid in your stomach backs up into the esophagus (your food pipe) and causes symptoms of a burning feeling rising from the stomach into the chest. The pH monitoring test is a valuable way to determine the severity of your acid reflux, so your physician can offer you the best treatment for your condition.

pH is a measure of acidity or alkalinity. In this test, you wear a small monitor that measures and records the level of acid in your esophagus over 24 hours. The monitor is attached to a tube that is inserted through your nose into your esophagus.

Prepare: Preparation is simple. You should not eat or drink anything for four to six hours before the test. Talk with your doctor about all medicines you are taking. He or she will tell you which should or should not be taken before the test.

What to Expect: To make the test more comfortable, medicine will be sprayed inside your nose to numb it. A thin, flexible, wire-like tube will be put into your nose and down your throat to measure the amount of acid that refluxes from your stomach. It should take just a few minutes to insert the tube. You may gag as it goes down, but this feeling will pass. Once the tube is attached to the monitor, you can go home and do your regular daily activities. Stay away from water! Do not swim or take a bath or shower. The monitor should not get wet. Do your normal activities. You might feel some mild pain in your ears, nose, or throat, but you should still keep to your regular schedule. Keep a personal log of what you eat and drink over the entire day. Make note of what times you have heartburn, pain in your chest, acid taste in your mouth, or other symptoms of acid reflux. You will need to return to hospital in 24 hours to have the tube removed and turn in your personal log.