

## HYDROGEN BREATH TEST (Lactose Tolerance Test)

A hydrogen breath test is done to see whether your child is able to digest and absorb certain sugars. The most common sugar tested is lactose, the sugar found in milk. Other sugars that can be tested include fructose, sucrose, lactulose, and even starch. If your child is not able to digest the sugar, the body cannot absorb it. This may cause gas, crampy abdominal pain, and diarrhea.

Hydrogen gas is produced from the unabsorbed sugar as it reaches the large intestine. This gas can be measured in your child's breath. During the hydrogen breath test, breath samples are taken and sent to the lab to be checked for hydrogen.

### HOW TO PREPARE FOR THE TEST

- Your child should have nothing to eat or drink after midnight the night before the test.
- He or she should not even have gum, mints, or cough drops. If your child takes medicines in the morning, check with the nurse to see if the medicines should be taken.
- Your child may brush her teeth, but should not swallow the toothpaste. Have her rinse her mouth well after brushing her teeth. Do not use dental wax.
- The test does not hurt. Explain the test to your child in a way she can understand.
- If your child is old enough, you can help her practice for the test. You will need a noisemaker party favor. Have your child blow into the end of the noisemaker and try to hold the curly end out while you slowly count to 10.
- The test will take 4 hours to complete. You may bring books, small toys, or a game to entertain your child while the test is being done.



**Picture 1** Breath is collected in a foil bag.

**APPOINTMENT**

Child's Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Arrival Time: \_\_\_\_\_

Check In:

GI Department, 1<sup>st</sup> Floor, J-West (G Building)

**Parking:** You may park in the Visitor Parking Garage or Valet Park at the main entrance of the hospital.

## **HOW THE TEST IS DONE**

- Your child will be taught by the nurse how to purse her lips around a plastic mouthpiece that is connected to the small foil collection bag (Picture 1, page 1).
- When your child breathes out, the breath is collected in the foil bag. Then your child will drink the sugar solution.
- Breath samples will be collected at certain times over the next 4 hours. Your nurse will tell you the times that each breath will be collected.
- Your child may not eat or drink anything until the test is finished.

## **AFTER THE TEST**

- Your child may eat and drink her usual foods after the test.
- Call the GI office at (614) 722-3450 in two weeks to get the results of the test and to see if any change in your child's medical treatment is needed.

If you have any questions, please ask your nurse or call the GI office.