Pediatric Urodynamic Testing

What is Urodynamic Testing?
Urodynamics is the study of how the body stores and releases urine. The test measures:
- The function of the bladder, urethra and pelvic floor muscles
- The pressure in the bladder as it fills stores and empties urine
- How the urine flows, how much urine your child’s bladder holds and muscle movements

The purpose of this test is to see how your child’s bladder functions and to find any problems. Your child’s doctor will decide how to treat their bladder symptoms based on the results. Please contact the clinic if your child is:
- Ill
- Being treated for a urinary tract infection (UTI)
- Being treated for a kidney infection
- Has been treated for a UTI or kidney infection within the past month

In these cases, your child’s testing may need to be rescheduled.

How do I prepare my child for the test?
The test will take about two hours. Your child should have one, soft, easy to pass bowel movement daily. If your child is on a special bowel program, please have them complete this the night before the test. Constipation may affect how accurate the test is. Your child should take all medicines as prescribed. If your child has decreased or no urinary sensation, the test will be performed in the Pediatric Specialties Clinic. If your child has normal urinary sensation, the test will be done with light sedation. Only a small amount of sedation can be used for the test or the results will not be accurate.

We understand this test may be difficult for your child. A Child Life Specialist may be able to help. They can help distract your child and cope during the test. They want your child comfortable. A team member from the clinic will contact you before the appointment to discuss how you need to prepare for the test.

Your child will need to be relaxed for the test. We suggest you talk to your child about this test in ways they can understand. Talk to them about:
- The test
- What to expect
- Why the test is needed
- What the doctor is trying to learn from this test
- How it might help improve their quality of life

This may help them understand and make testing easier for your child. Reassure your child you may be with them during the entire test. The more relaxed the parent is, the more relaxed the child is. By working together, we hope to complete the test with the least amount of stress for you and your child.

What to bring for the test?
Please bring items you feel will comfort your child. Feel free to bring their favorite comfort item, toy or pacifier. Also, bring socks and a change of clothes with you.

During the Test:
Your child will lie on an exam table for the test. Your child’s genital area will be exposed and cleansed to prepare for the catheters to be placed. A small, soft tube (catheter) will be placed into your child’s bladder through their urethra (opening
where your child urinates). This catheter measures your child’s bladder pressure. A second type of soft catheter will be placed just inside your child’s rectum. This catheter measures your child’s abdominal pressure and is not painful but may be uncomfortable. Your child may feel like they need to have a bowel movement. Three small sticky patches will be placed near your child’s rectum to measure the pelvic floor muscles. All tubes will be secured with tape to make sure they stay in place during the test.

Once the tubes and pads are in place they will be connected to the computer. The test is now ready to begin.

Your child’s bladder will be slowly filled with sterile fluid. The bladder is filled at a similar rate to how the bladder fills on its own. During the test the nurse will ask questions about the sensations your child is feeling as the bladder fills. After we get the information we need, the nurse will help your child urinate in a bedpan or urinal with all catheters in place. We will need to gather information as your child’s bladder empties. If your child is not able to urinate on their own, the bladder will be emptied through the catheter. The catheter may need to be adjusted from time to time during the test to make sure the bladder is completely empty. Two tests will be performed.

If your child is scheduled for a video urodynamic study, the bladder will be filled with a special contrast instead of water. This contrast allows your doctor to use x-ray images to see your bladder while filling, straining, coughing, and passing urine. Please call us if you or another adult coming with you could be or is pregnant. No other children will be allowed to attend this study due to x-ray exposure.

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After the Test:
When the test is complete, all the tubes and sticky pads will be removed. Your child may have some burning when they urinate after the test. This is normal and should improve the more often your child urinates. It should go away within 24 hours. Make sure your child drinks plenty of fluids. If your child is having any pain, you may give Tylenol®. A warm bath or shower may also help if they are having discomfort when they urinate.

When to Call the Doctor:
- Temperature greater than 100.4° F by mouth for 2 readings taken 4 hours apart
- Problems passing urine
- Large blood clots in your urine
- Bloody urine you cannot see through
- Ongoing pain or burning with urination

Phone Numbers:

Pediatric Urology Clinic (608) 263-6420

After hours, the clinic number will be answered by the paging operator. Ask for the Pediatric Urology Resident on call. Leave your name and phone number with the area code. The doctor will call you back. If you live out of the area, call: 1-800-323-8942.

Pediatric Sedation Clinic: (608) 262-4402
If you are a patient receiving care at UnityPoint – Meriter, Swedish American or a health system outside of UW Health, please use the phone numbers provided in your discharge instructions for any questions or concerns.

Your health care team may have given you this information as part of your care. If so, please use it and call if you have any questions. If this information was not given to you as part of your care, please check with your doctor. This is not medical advice. This is not to be used for diagnosis or treatment of any medical condition. Because each person’s health needs are different, you should talk with your doctor or others on your health care team when using this information. If you have an emergency, please call 911. Copyright © 5/2019 University of Wisconsin Hospitals and Clinics Authority. All rights reserved. Produced by the Department of Nursing. HF#7183