



URODYNAMICS

Urodynamics is a procedure to study bladder function. It is a test, not a treatment. It provides crucial information on the underlying causes of incontinence, bladder symptoms and storage-voiding problems, in turn guiding treatment of these disorders. However, urodynamics cannot assess the lining of the bladder, or the prostate, or the kidneys, and therefore other tests may be needed to reach a specific diagnosis.

The procedure is performed either in the clinic or X-ray department, on a day-visit basis. A fine pressure catheter is placed into the bladder, which is filled with sterile saline and X-ray contrast fluid. Pressure readings and X-rays may be taken during this time and whilst passing urine. In specific circumstances, a rectal pressure catheter is required, but this is no longer a standard part of the procedure.

Urodynamics is not painful nor is a recovery period necessary. It is however a wet procedure: we are trying to replicate normal bladder function, including leakage, and all patients find the process embarrassing. Whilst your bladder function and voiding are intensely private activities, bear in mind that urodynamics is a normal part of our work and that every patient having this investigation suffers from similar problems: incontinence, bladder symptoms or voiding difficulty.

WHAT TO DO BEFORE YOUR PROCEDURE:

- please complete a bladder diary over a convenient 48-hour period if you have not done this previously. Eating / drinking / urinating should be as per your normal routine.
- ensure a urine sample is tested at the laboratory 1 week prior to procedure, unless advised otherwise
- continue any regular medications as usual
- take 1g (2 tablets) paracetamol >1 hour before your procedure
- eat and drink normally on the day of your procedure

WHAT HAPPENS AFTER YOUR PROCEDURE:

- some burning may occur with voiding, but this settles rapidly
- increase fluid intake to wash out the bladder
- there is no restriction on driving or on normal activities, including sexual intercourse

WHAT CAN GO WRONG:

Urodynamics is generally a safe procedure.

However, as X-rays are often used, please advise if there is a possibility you may be pregnant. Similarly, we need to know if you are allergic to iodine, shellfish or X-ray contrast dyes.

Bleeding or infection occur in 2% of patients overall. Other complications are considered rare and extraordinary.

- Bleeding usually settles spontaneously, but rarely causes clots and urinary retention and requires catheterisation and bladder wash out.
- Infection may present as burning - frequency - urgency, requiring oral antibiotic treatment, or fevers, sweats and shivers for which admission to hospital for IV antibiotic is needed.