

Thank you for choosing Duke Gastroenterology (GI) for your healthcare needs. Your provider ordered a lactulose breath test for you. This test helps to diagnose reasons for abdominal bloating or pain, weight gain or loss, diarrhea, or constipation. Call Duke GI at (919) 684-6437 if you have questions about this test, preparation, or appointment. If you have questions about these instructions, call Duke GI and ask to speak to a nurse.

## What Is a Lactulose Breath Test?

During this test, you will breathe into a collection tube several times. You will also drink a solution called lactulose. Your breath samples are tested for hydrogen and methane gas levels. This test measures gases produced in your small intestine, so you must follow these instructions. The clinic team will reschedule your breath test if you do not follow each step.

## Testing Information

- You do not need a driver for this test.
- This test takes two (2) hours to complete. You will be at the clinic for two (2) hours and cannot leave during testing.
- Duke GI performs this test at specific GI Clinics. Check your appointment date, time, and location.



## Four (4) Weeks Before Your Breath Test

- Do not schedule any tests or procedures with a bowel preparation or barium.
- Stop taking all antibiotics and probiotics unless instructed by your GI provider.



## One Week Before Your Breath Test

- Do **NOT** take any laxatives, including Dulcolax (Bisacodyl), Senokot (Senna), Cascara, or Ex-lax (sennosides).
- Do **NOT** take any medicines with Bismuth like Pepto-Bismol or Kaopectate.



## The Day Before Your Breath Test – 24 hours before your test

- You must eat a **LOW-RESIDUE DIET for 24 hours before your scheduled test time.** Follow the information below.
- Stop** eating all food 12 hours before your test.
- Stop** drinking all liquids at midnight (12:00 AM).



**LOW-RESIDUE DIET INFORMATION**

**Eat these foods for 24 hours before your test.**  
**STOP eating all food 12 hours before your test.**



**Meats:**

Baked or broiled chicken, fish, or turkey

**Broth:**

Chicken, beef, or vegetable/vegan broth

**Dairy Products:**

Eggs

**Grain Products:**

Steamed white rice

**Seasoning:**

Salt and pepper

**Beverages:**

Water, plain coffee, and tea

**Do NOT add sugar, artificial sweeteners, powdered creamers, or milk products**

**Do Not Eat these foods the day before your test.**



**Pastas and Grains:**

All pasta, whole grain products, bran, high fiber cereals, or granola

**Fruit Products:**

All fruits, fruit juices, applesauce, apricots, bananas, cantaloupe, canned fruit cocktail, grapes, honeydew melon, peaches, watermelon, and raw and dried fruits like raisins and berries

**Vegetables:**

Vegetable juices, potatoes, alfalfa sprouts, beets, green/yellow beans, carrots, celery, cucumber, eggplant, lettuce, mushrooms, green/red peppers, squash, zucchini, broccoli, cauliflower, brussel sprouts, cabbage, kale, swiss chard, beans, lentils, corn

**Nuts, Seeds, and Beans:**

All nuts, seeds, and beans, including foods that contain nuts, seeds, and beans

**Dairy:**

Milk, cheese, ice cream, yogurt, margarine butter

**The Day of Your Breath Test – When You Wake Up**

- Do **NOT** eat any food until after your test.
- Six (6) hours before your test, take your daily prescription medicine with a sip of water. Do **NOT** take any vitamins or supplements.
- Do **NOT** smoke at least two (2) hours before the test. (Including cigarettes, e-cigarettes, cigars, and vaping devices)
- Do **NOT** exercise at least two (2) hours before the test.
- You can brush your teeth and use mouthwash. Do **NOT** swallow the toothpaste or mouthwash.



**The Day of Your Breath Test - During Your Test**

- Do not eat, drink, or smoke during your test.

## Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) about the Lactulose Breath Test

### **I am a diabetic. Should I take my diabetes medicines before my breath test?**

Yes, continue taking your medicine, injections, and insulin.



### **What are examples of laxatives?**

- Dulcolax (Bisacodyl)
- Fleet (Bisacodyl)
- Senokot (Senna)
- Cascara
- Ex-Lax (Sennosides)

### **What procedures or tests require a bowel preparation (bowel cleanse)?**

- Colonoscopy
- Flexible Sigmoidoscopy
- CT Colonography
- Capsule Endoscopy

### **What are the names of bowel preparations?**

Bowel preparations are laxative medicines. These medicines are available over-the-counter or with a prescription. Examples are MiraLAX, Golytely, NuLytely, SuPrep, SuTab, and MoviPrep.

### **What are procedures or tests with barium contrast?**

Barium is a contrast medicine used during radiology tests. This medicine is given in a drink, through an IV, in food, or with an enema.

- **CT Scan with barium contrast**
- **Upper and Lower GI Series with barium contrast**
- **Barium Swallow Study**
- **Barium enema**

### **Can I drink alcohol, wine, or beer before my test?**

Alcohol, wine, and beer contain carbohydrates and sugars. Do NOT drink these at least 24 hours before your test.

### **Can I chew gum, hard candies, or candy?**

These foods contain carbohydrates and sugar. Do NOT chew gum or eat candy for 24 hours before your test.

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