

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.

Scheduling 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

- ☐ You must eat a **LOW-RESIDUE DIET**. Follow the information below. If you do not follow the diet information below your test will be rescheduled.
- ☐ **Stop** eating all food 12 hours before your test.
- ☐ **Stop** drinking all liquids at midnight (12:00 AM).



Low Residue Diet Information

These are the ONLY foods you can eat the day before your test.

Meats: Baked or broiled chicken, fish, or turkey

Broth: Chicken, turkey, beef, or vegetable/vegan broth

Dairy Products: Eggs

Grain Products: Steamed white rice

Seasoning: Salt and pepper

Beverages: Water, plain coffee, and unsweet tea

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



The Day of Your Breath Test

- ☐ 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 but 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.

Lactulose Breath Test Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

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 any candy for 24 hours before your test.