Wrightington, Wigan and Leigh Teaching Hospitals
NHS Foundation Trust

Urodynamics (Bladder)

Version number: **10**
Last modified date: **12th November 2026**

Urodynamics

Patient Information

Richmond Urology Unit, Leigh Infirmary

- Author ID: LC / SF
- Leaflet Ref: Urol 012
- Version: 10
- Leaflet title: Urodynamics
- Last review: April 2025
- Expiry Date: April 2027

What are Urodynamic studies?

Urodynamics is a urinary bladder investigation, which is carried out on The Richmond Urology Unit. Urodynamic studies are carried out to assess bladder function. Changes in bladder pressure during filling and during emptying are recorded on a special computer. This is used when assessing bladder symptoms and incontinence. The test takes approximately 40 minutes to complete.

How is this carried out?

- You will be asked to attend with a full bladder on arrival for the investigation unless you have an urethral catheter (tube in your bladder).

You will then be asked to empty your bladder in our special toilet so that we can record your flow rate.

- You will be asked to change into a gown and remove your lower garments
- A small catheter is passed along the urethra up to the bladder and secured with tape on the top of your leg as it is important that the catheter remains in the bladder during emptying.
- It will be necessary to clean the opening of the urethra to prevent infection.
- Local anaesthetic gel is then inserted into the urethra, the gel also contains antiseptic this can sting for a few seconds then the catheter is inserted.
- The catheter has 2 sections one to record bladder activity; one is used to fill the bladder with Saline solution.

- Another small balloon attached to a catheter is inserted into the rectum to record abdominal pressure changes, this is necessary to assess if these changes are affecting the bladder.

- The bladder is then filled slowly with the saline solution. You will be asked various questions regarding bladder sensation and/or depending on your symptoms you may be asked to stand up to carry out some gentle exercises.

- It is important to accurately record what is happening in your bladder and this can mean that on occasion we will make you leak, especially if this is one of your symptoms, this is only the saline solution that we are putting into your bladder.

- Once you feel that your bladder is full you will again be asked to empty your bladder but this time the catheters will remain in the bladder to record bladder activity during emptying.

- The catheters are then removed and the test is completed.

Video Urodynamics

- This is carried out on The Richmond Urology Unit at Leigh Infirmary.

- The procedure for inserting the catheter is exactly the same as with ordinary urodynamics.

- A special fluid is put into you bladder that we are able to see on the x-rays allowing us to see how parts of your bladder are working.

- X-ray pictures are taken at various stages throughout the test.

- The x-ray table will tilt and you will be moved into an upright/standing position at the appropriate time during the test.

- Once the procedure is completed you will be asked to empty your bladder and the catheters are removed.

- As with all X-ray procedures female patients must inform the staff if there is any possibility of them being pregnant.

- The dose of x-ray exposure with this test is however very low.

Ambulatory Urodynamic Studies

- This procedure is carried out on the Richmond Urology Unit at Leigh infirmary. Most patients will have already had standard urodynamics performed but we were still unable to confirm a diagnosis.

- The procedure for insertion of catheters is exactly the same as with standard urodynamics.

- Once the catheters are in place they are connected to a small battery devise, this is secured to a belt which is worn around the waist.

- Loose fitting clothing is advised as you will be asked to walk around the hospital if possible to recreate normal activity e.g. using stairs etc.

- The test will last approx. **1 to 2 hours.**

- During the test you will be asked to mark events using a hand held devise this will be explained to you on the day.

Benefit

- The main benefit to having this procedure is that it enables us to be sure if surgery will be the best course of action in treating your condition.

Alternatives

- There are no alternative investigations to urodynamics, this is the best diagnostic tool available to determine whether or not surgical intervention would be beneficial.

Risks

- There is a small risk of urinary tract infection however if you drink 1 to 2 pints of fluid this will help reduce the risk.

- There is a small risk of bleeding following the insertion of urethral catheter predominantly for men as the catheter can scratch the prostate gland, again if you drink 1 to 2 pints of fluids this will help to flush the urethra and the bleeding will settle.

Advice following procedure

- Drink more fluids approximately 1 to 2 pints this will help to reduce the risk of infection.

- You may experience some discomfort when passing urine for up to 24 hours following the procedure, this should settle.

- If the discomfort persists, contact us on the number provided you may need to send a specimen of water to the laboratory for examination.

- If you notice any bleeding this is also nothing to worry about but if this has not settled within 24 hours again contact us on the number provided.

Contact information

Urology Nurse Specialists: 01942 264491 at Leigh

Please leave a message on answer machine if there is no one there to take your call.



Version number: **10**
Last modified date: **12th November 2026**

All rights reserved © 2026
WWL Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust