

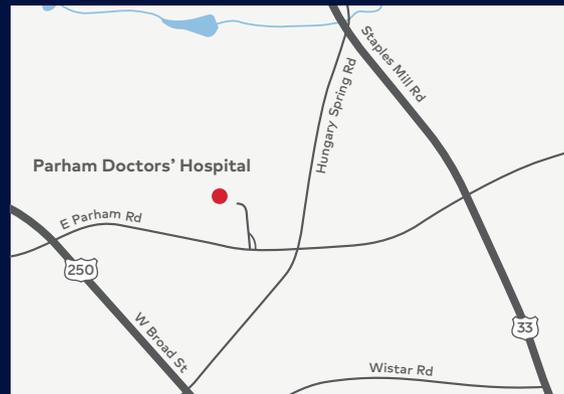
Heartburn, GERD, and Reflux Testing

When is Testing Appropriate?

Approximately 20% of Americans suffer from heartburn—the most common symptom of gastroesophageal reflux disease (GERD). If left uncontrolled, chronic (long-term) heartburn can result in serious health problems, including

- esophagitis - erosions and ulcers in the lining of the esophagus)
- Barrett's esophagus - abnormal cells in the esophagus, a risk factor for cancer of the esophagus
- strictures - scarring of the lining of the esophagus
- esophageal cancer

When medication or lifestyle changes don't alleviate the symptoms of GERD, your doctor may order tests to confirm a diagnosis and check for other problems.



TESTING LOCATION

Esophageal Manometry and 24-hour pH tests are performed by a nurse at the Motility and Pelvic Floor Center of Parham Doctors' Hospital, located at 7700 East Parham Road in Richmond.

If you have questions, please call 804-545-7987.

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Esophageal Motility Study (Manometry)

The esophagus is a long, muscular tube (sometimes called the “food pipe”) that connects your throat to your stomach. Esophageal manometry will help us find out how the muscles work in your esophagus while you’re swallowing, including the:

- rhythmic muscle contractions that occur in your esophagus when you swallow
- force and coordination of esophageal muscles as they move food to your stomach

Your nose and throat will be numbed. A small tube containing pressure sensors will then be placed through your nose, down your esophagus, and into your stomach. You will be asked to swallow water several times until the tube is removed.

The test will take approximately 25-to-35 minutes to complete.

Preparing for the test

Do not eat for at least eight hours before the test or drink six hours before the test. Do not take any medications on the day of the test, including blood pressure medication, heart medication, and muscle relaxants. Do not take Reglan (Metocloperamide) 48 hours before the test. Do not smoke for at least two hours before the test. **Plan to arrive 30 minutes before your test.**

You will be able to drive following this test and do not need to bring a driver with you.

After the test

You may feel a temporary sore throat after the test. Lozenges or gargling with salt water may help.

Please call your physician if you experience any new or increased chest pain, difficulty swallowing, shortness of breath, or an elevated temperature.

24-Hour Esophageal pH Monitoring

A 24-hour esophageal pH test measures and records the acid in your esophagus to determine if you have gastroesophageal reflux disease (GERD). The test can also determine the effectiveness of medications or surgery for GERD.

Your nose and your throat will be numbed. A small tube, called a catheter, will be inserted through your nose extending to your esophagus. The end of the tube that comes out of your nose is taped to your face and attached to a portable recorder that’s worn on your belt or over your shoulder. The recorder has several buttons on it that you will press to mark certain events. The computer records acid levels in your esophagus over a 20-to-24 hour period. You will be able to swallow, talk, and breathe without any difficulty during the test.

Placement of the catheter takes about 30 minutes.

A nurse will review the monitoring instructions with you. You will be asked to return the following day to return the device and have the tube removed.

Preparing for the test

Do not eat for at least eight hours before the test or drink six hours before the test.

In order to achieve the best test results, we need your acid build-up to be at its worst. Discontinue use of heartburn relief medications such as **Dexilant**, Prilosec, Prevacid, Nexium and Aciphex for at least five-to-seven days prior to testing. Discontinue use of use Tagamet, Zantac, Pepcid, Carafate, and antacids (Maalox, Roloids, Tums, etc.) at least 48 hours prior to testing.

You will be able to drive following this test and do not need to bring a driver with you.

Barium Swallow/UGIS (Upper Gastrointestinal Series)

A barium swallow study can show if you’re experiencing reflux while standing up or lying down. It can also show any abnormalities, such as a hiatal hernia.

This study is a series of X-rays of the esophagus, stomach, and the first part of the small intestine, called the duodenum. X-rays are taken during and after drinking contrast material called barium. The barium solution is a thick, chalky, milkshake-like liquid that coats the inside lining of your GI tract, making it more visible on the X-rays

Preparing for the test

Do not eat for at least eight hours before the test or drink six hours before the test.

You will be able to drive following this test and do not need to bring a driver with you.

Additional Testing

Depending on your symptoms, your physician may order additional testing, including:

- EGD (Esophagogastroduodenoscopy)
- Abdominal Ultrasound
- Gastric Emptying
- HIDA Scan
- Bravo Study*

* The Bravo Study is a minimally invasive test for evaluation of frequent heartburn or related symptoms. A temporary capsule is placed into your esophagus, and throughout the test period will measure your PH and acid production over the course of 48 hours.

About Financing

Please discuss insurance coverage with your employer or insurance carrier. Bring your medical insurance card to the hospital. You will receive separate bills from the hospital and the physician.