



## **Lactose Breath Hydrogen Test**

This test is used to determine intolerance to lactose due to lactase deficiency. Lactase is an enzyme which the body secretes to digest lactose, the sugar found in milk products. When a person does not have the lactase enzyme, the milk sugar remains undigested in the intestine until it reaches the large intestine. The bacteria normally present in the large intestine digest the milk sugar and release metabolic waste products. These waste products result in the production of breath hydrogen, which can be measured.

### **Scheduling the Test:**

To schedule the test, you or your physician's office need to call us to arrange an appointment time. We cannot schedule this test without a valid, written order that has been signed by your physician. We are happy to schedule the test in a timely manner. However, if you cannot make the appointment, please call us as soon as possible. This test usually lasts several hours and can last as long as 4 hours.

### **Preparation for the Test:**

1. Antibiotics will interfere with the results of the test. The patient needs to be off antibiotics for at least 2 weeks for this test to be valid. If you have been prescribed antibiotics, please check with your physician as your appointment may need to be rescheduled.
2. Some individuals may have already tried an over the counter product for lactose intolerance, such as Lactaid. These products must be stopped 3 days prior to the tests as it can hide intolerance.

### **The Day Before the Test:**

1. Lunch should be eaten by 1:00PM. After that time, you can have only rice (white, brown or wild), fruit juices and clear liquids (gelatin, broth, Gatorade, Popsicles and tea). Avoid carbonated beverages as these will interfere with the test.
2. No food or drink after midnight the night before the test.

### **The Day of the Test:**

1. Do not use toothpaste on the morning of the test. Use a toothbrush with only water.
2. Continue to fast the morning of the test.
3. If testing is being performed on a small child, it may be easier to get them to drink the lactose solution if a favorite cup or bottle is brought from home.
4. Testing may last for up to 4 hours. It is suggested that you bring books, toys, games, homework, etc., to keep you or your child entertained.

### **Testing:**

1. A baseline breath hydrogen sample will be collected and measured first. The patient will then be asked to drink a lactose\* solution dissolved in water. It will have a very sweet taste, like light syrup. This is the loading dose of sugar and is the only dose of sugar given during the test.
2. After the sugar has been swallowed, the patient will be asked to blow into a breath collection bag at various times, for the duration of the test. During the test, no eating is allowed and only a small amount of water may be taken.
3. Between giving breath samples, the patient may go for walks, watch television, do homework, read or play with toys and games.
4. If testing is performed on a child, please be prepared to be with your child for the entire time the test is being done.

### **After the Test:**

You (or your child) may resume your usual diet. The results will be sent to your physician. If testing indicates lactose intolerance, then you should refer to your physician's instructions.

**\*NOTE:** Please be aware that part of the test includes drinking a solution that may contain the following ingredients:

- Lactose
- Phenylalanine
- Citric Acid

If you are aware of any sensitivity to the above, please notify your physician immediately.

Please contact us at least 24 hours prior to your scheduled appointment if you need to reschedule, 602-933-0314.

**Not Part of the Medical Record**