

Ano-rectal physiology studies and endo-anal ultrasound



Information for patients
Gastrointestinal Physiology



PROUD TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE

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The aims of this booklet are:

- To inform and involve you in your care
- To answer questions you may have about the tests
- To explain what happens on the day of the test

Your Consultant has requested that you have tests which will help find the cause of your symptoms. These tests are not painful and you will not require sedation. They will not cause you any discomfort afterwards. We do understand that you may have concerns about having this type of test and we would like to reassure you that they are conducted in a quiet private room and the Healthcare Scientist will ensure your comfort and dignity is preserved at all times.

The tests may include:

- Ano-rectal manometry
- Sensory awareness test
- Balloon expulsion
- Endo-anal ultrasound

What is ano-rectal manometry?

Ano-rectal manometry is a test that allows the Healthcare Scientist to assess the pressures in your back passage. The information from this test is used to help your Consultant and other members of the colorectal team decide what the best treatment plan is for you.

The test involves inserting a specially designed probe called a manometry catheter into the back passage (see figure 1). This is a tube about the thickness of a little finger and has many sensors along it. During the test you will be asked to perform a set of manoeuvres such as squeezing your muscles and coughing. The resulting pressure inside your rectum and anal canal will be measured and images are displayed on a computer screen. The information helps the Healthcare Scientist to

understand how the muscles function and why you are getting your symptoms.

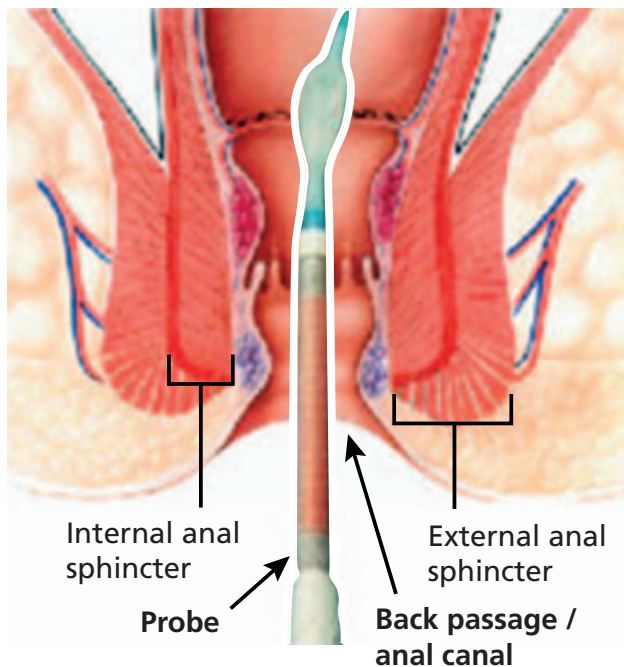


Figure 1

What is the sensory awareness test?

On the manometry catheter, described above, is a balloon. This balloon can be filled with varying amounts of air to mimic the sensations of wanting to go to the toilet. Please do not worry, it will not make you go to the toilet. The balloon simulates these sensations to allow the Healthcare Scientist to assess your ability to sense the volumes of air.

What is balloon expulsion?

This is used to help understand if it is the muscles in the back passage that are preventing the stool from being passed successfully. This test may be undertaken depending on your symptoms. A thin tube with a small balloon attached is placed in the lower part of the rectum and inflated with a small amount of water (50ml). You will be asked to push the balloon out whilst alone in a private room or sitting on a toilet. This simple test often helps both you and the Healthcare Scientist understand if the muscles are working correctly and then advice can be offered to help you overcome this.

What is an endo-anal ultrasound?

Endo-anal ultrasound allows the Healthcare Scientist to image the muscles and sphincters in your back passage. The test is painless and is over in a matter of minutes. It involves inserting a specially designed probe into the back passage.

It is covered with a sheath for your protection. It is very important to let the Healthcare Scientist know if you are allergic to latex or nitrile before the test begins.

What are the risks of having the tests?

As with all procedures, there are risks and these include minor discomfort, bleeding and, rarely, perforation of the bowel wall. However, the overall risk of having a problem when undergoing these specialist tests is considered to be unlikely.

Before the tests

We would expect that you will have already had an examination of your lower bowel by your Consultant, such as a colonoscopy, sigmoidoscopy, proctogram or digital rectal examination. If you have not had an examination or it is over 12 months since your last, would you please ring the Department on **0114 271 4293** as we may have to rearrange your appointment.

Enclosed with your appointment letter is a questionnaire. Please complete and bring the questionnaire with you to the hospital. If you are unable to complete this, the Healthcare Scientist will help you. However, answering these questions at home before your appointment will allow you to give as much information as you feel will help the Healthcare Scientist understand your symptoms and why you have them.

We must seek your consent for any procedure or treatment beforehand. The Healthcare Scientist will explain the risks, benefits and alternatives where relevant before they ask for your consent. If you are unsure about any aspect of the procedure or treatment proposed, please do not hesitate to ask for more information.

You may continue taking all your usual medication and you may eat and drink as usual. There is no bowel preparation required for these tests.

Before insertion of the manometry catheter the Healthcare Scientist will perform a digital rectal examination to ensure it is safe to proceed with the tests.

Where do I go?

The Department is located on C floor (ground level) in the Chesterman building at the Northern General Hospital. If you come in via the main entrance, please walk past the coffee shop, turn left, walk a few yards down the corridor and the Department of GI Physiology is on the right hand side. Please ring the bell on the wall and a member of staff will

open the door. Once checked in you will be asked to take a seat in the small waiting room. A member of staff will take you in to a private room where a Healthcare Scientist will discuss the test with you. Although you are very welcome to bring someone to accompany you, when it is busy we may ask that they wait in the main waiting area in Chesterman. Please note: the Department is closed between 12.30pm and 1.00pm.

Please allow plenty of time for parking prior to your appointment as parking is limited in and around the hospital, also please ensure you have some change for the ticket machines.

Please note: if you are more than 15 minutes late for your appointment it may not be possible to see you and your appointment may have to be rearranged. If you are unable to keep your appointment, please make every effort to cancel it well in advance so that it may be offered to someone else.

Can I bring my children with me?

Unfortunately it is not appropriate to bring children under the age of 16 into this area. If you need to arrange childcare then we would be very happy to rearrange your appointment with you.

What should I expect?

- You will be asked to sign a consent form and the Healthcare Scientist will check through your questionnaire. You will be asked to take off your clothing from the waist down and to cover yourself with a sheet and lie on a couch on your left side with your knees drawn up.
- Prior to the tests a quick and simple rectal examination will be carried out to ensure the safe passage of the investigation probes.
- The tests usually take about 45 minutes from start to finish, although you should expect to be here for up to 1 hour.

- The Northern General Hospital is a teaching hospital and has a responsibility to ensure that students receive a high standard of training. Occasionally there may be a trainee with relevant experience performing the procedure or a trainee or assessor observing the procedure in the Department. You will be informed beforehand and it is your right to decline anything you are not comfortable with.

What happens after the test?

You will be able to go home straight after the test and you are safe to drive a car or go back to work. Your results will be passed on to the Consultant who referred you and you will receive them at your next appointment with him or her. If you have not got an appointment then you will usually be contacted in due course.

What should I do if I would like more information?

For further information please contact the Department of GI Physiology on:

- **0114 271 4293**

Further reading

- <https://www.bladderandbowel.org/>
- www.corecharity.org.uk/



To help support your local hospitals visit
sheffieldhospitalscharity.org.uk

Registered Charity No. 1165762



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