

# Hydrogen/Methane Breath Test: Lactulose

*How to prepare and what to expect*

## How to Prepare

Starting 4 Weeks Before	Starting 2 Weeks Before	Starting 1 Week Before	Starting 1 Day Before	On Test Day
Date:	Date:	Date:	Date:	Date:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Stop</b> taking all antibiotics.</li> <li>• Do <b>not</b> have any procedures that require you to clean your bowels, such as a colonoscopy or barium enema.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stop taking all probiotics, <b>if</b> you can do so without causing GI symptoms or other health problems.</li> <li>• If you have diabetes and take insulin or diabetes medicine, talk with your diabetes care provider about changing your doses on the day of the test.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• During your test, keep taking your proton pump inhibitors (PPI) such as dexlansoprazole, esomeprazole, lansoprazole, omeprazole, pantoprazole, or rabeprazole.</li> <li>• <b>If</b> you can do so without causing GI symptoms or other health problems:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>Stop</b> taking all laxatives, stool softeners, and stool-bulking products such as Colace, Milk of Magnesia, Ex-Lax, Metamucil, or Citrucel.</li> <li>- <b>Stop</b> taking all medicines and supplements that your doctor did not prescribe. This includes multivitamins, herbal remedies, and saw palmetto.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• You may eat <b>only</b> these foods:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Plain white rice, steamed</li> <li>- Chicken, turkey, or fish, baked or broiled</li> <li>- Eggs</li> <li>- Water</li> <li>- Unflavored black coffee or tea</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Season your food with <b>only</b> salt and pepper.</li> <li>• Do <b>not</b> eat any dairy products. This includes butter and margarine.</li> </ul> <p><b>Starting 12 hours before your test:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Do <b>not</b> eat or drink anything except water.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If you brush your teeth in the morning, wait 2 hours before you start the test.</li> <li>• Do <b>not</b> use mouthwash.</li> <li>• Do <b>not</b> smoke or be around someone who is smoking for at least 1 hour before you start the test.</li> <li>• If you have diabetes, follow your provider’s instructions about any changes in your diabetes medicines.</li> </ul> <p><b>During the test:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Do <b>not</b> eat, drink, chew gum or tobacco, smoke, or eat breath mints or candy.</li> <li>• It is OK to have sips of water.</li> <li>• Do <b>not</b> sleep or exercise.</li> </ul> <p><b>After the test:</b></p> <p>You may return to your usual diet and activities right away.</p>

## How to Find Us

**Digestive Health Center**  
206.598.4377

**Location:**

University of Washington Medical Center -  
Montlake campus  
Surgery Pavilion, 3rd Floor  
1959 N.E. Pacific Street  
Seattle, WA 98195

**Directions:**

From N.E. Pacific St., follow the signs to the  
Emergency Room. At the stop sign, enter the  
Surgery Pavilion Parking Garage on the left.

After parking in the garage, take the elevator  
to the 3rd floor. As you exit the elevator,  
turn right into the Digestive Health Center.

## Questions?

Your questions are important. Please call  
**206.598.4377** if you have questions or  
concerns about your test.

## Why do I need this test?

Your provider may ask you to do this test if you have any of these symptoms:

- Belly pain
- Cramping
- Stomach discomfort
- Bloating
- Diarrhea

This test finds out if bacteria in your bowels (intestines) are causing your symptoms.

## What to Expect

- We will give you a box that contains a sugar solution, a test tube device, tubes, and mailing instructions.
- You will take this test at home. After you drink the sugar solution, you will breathe into the test tube device every 15 minutes. Your doctor will tell you how long you need to do this. Some patients need to do this for about 3 hours.
- Follow the instructions in the box to mail your test tubes.
- After you mail your test tubes, it may take up to 2 weeks for the lab to process your breath samples and review the results. The provider who ordered your test will give you the results when they are ready.