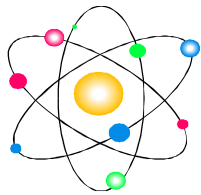


# Carbon-14 Breath Test



## Information for Patients

UHN



### How Nuclear Medicine works

Nuclear medicine exams assess how your organs work. This is different from other areas of radiology, which create images based on your anatomy.

During a Nuclear Medicine procedure, you will swallow, inhale, or receive an injection of a radioactive material called a **radiopharmaceutical**. When the radiopharmaceutical reaches the right area, a technologist will take pictures of you with a special machine called a gamma camera.

### What is a Carbon-14 breath test?

A Carbon-14 breath looks for bacteria called *Helicobacter pylori* in the stomach. If these bacteria are there, it could cause stomach problems, including ulcers.

### What is this test like?

- To do this test we need to collect breath samples.
- We will ask you to blow into a vial until the blue solution in it turns clear.

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University Health Network  
Toronto General Hospital Toronto Western Hospital Princess Margaret Hospital

- We collect the first sample at the beginning of the test to give us a "baseline measurement". (This means a first test we use as a reference to monitor you as your levels change.)
- Then you will brush your teeth carefully with toothpaste before you drink a small amount of C-14, which is our radioactive tracer.
- You will then brush your teeth again, this time without toothpaste. We will collect two more breath samples at 2 minutes and 12 minutes after the drink.
- Since your toothbrush may have a small amount of radioactive tracer on it, we will throw it away at the end of the test.

### After the test

There are no known side effects from this test. You can go back to your normal activities once the exam is over. We will send the report to your doctor.

### Preparing for this test

- Do NOT have anything to eat or drink for 6 hours before your appointment.
- Bring a toothbrush that you can throw away. We will give you toothpaste, but you may bring your own if you like.

### Here is a list of medications that affect this test:

Medication	When to stop taking the medication
Antibiotics	30 days
<b>Bismuth:</b> Pepto bismol/Bismuth Subsalicylate	30 days
<b>Proton Pump Inhibitors:</b> Prevacid, Losec, Pantoloc, Nexium, Demperidone maleate and Pariet	2 weeks

Medication	When to stop taking the medication
<b>Gastroduodenal Cytoprotective Agents:</b> Sulcrate (Sucralfate)	2 weeks
Barium Swallow	2 weeks
<b>Histamine H2 Receptor Antagonist:</b> Rantidine, Zantac, NuRanit, Pepcid, Tagamet and Axid.	OK to take for test
<b>Antacids:</b> Maalox, Dioval, Mylanta, Riopan, Milk of Magnesia, ASA, Magnesium Carbonate, Rexodon, Tums.	OK to take for test
Dicetel	OK to take for test

**For female patients**

If there is any chance are pregnant please tell the technologist **before** beginning the test.

You can keep breastfeeding for this test, but tell the technologist if you are nursing a baby.

Your Carbon-14 breath test has been scheduled on \_\_\_\_\_ at \_\_\_\_\_.

If you have any questions or concerns about the test, or if you need to cancel or reschedule your appointment, please contact the Nuclear Medicine department, Toronto General Hospital at 416-340-3311.

At Toronto General Hospital, the Nuclear Medicine department is located on the first floor of the hospital, ES1-408, near the east elevators.

Check in at the Medical Imaging reception area (University Avenue entrance, across from the pharmacy) **15 minutes before your appointment.**