

Eden Medics
Gynaecology, Uro-gynaecology and Urodynamics Specialist Services
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Dr Ben Onyeka

MBBS; DFFP; CCST (UK); Cert Urodynamics (UK); FRCOG; FRANZCOG
Gynaecologist and Obstetrician
Medical Director Eden Medics

Suite 4
St John of God Hospital
8 Gibb street, Berwick Vic 3806
Appointment 03 9768 9331
Fax 03 9769 4520

Urodynamics investigation (information for female patients)

What is Urodynamics?

This is a computerised bladder function test that helps to determine the cause of urinary incontinence. It may also be helpful in the diagnosis of other bladder symptoms and also in the evaluation of vaginal prolapse. During the test, pressure within the bladder cavity, the abdomen and bladder wall is determined and the ability of the bladder to hold on to and expel urine is also measured.

Why is it necessary?

The results generated from the test helps the doctor make a proper and complete diagnosis of your bladder and/or prolapse symptoms. This in turn will enable the doctor to determine the best treatment approach in order to resolve urinary incontinence and other bladder/prolapse symptoms.

How is the test performed?

To begin with, you will be required to change into a gown. Next, you will be asked to sit in a commode and empty your bladder into a machine that measures the speed of urine flow (uroflowmeter). Following this, two tiny pressure-sensitive tubes (catheters) are inserted into you while lying on a couch or bed. One of the catheters will be inserted into your bladder through your urethra, while the other will be inserted either into your vagina or rectum. These catheters will help determine the pressure readings necessary to make a diagnosis after the test. The one connected to the bladder has two lumens (openings), one of which will be used to slowly fill up your bladder with fluid (e.g. saline) during the test. The other ends of the catheters are then connected to a computer that generates recording that will be analysed at the end of the test. As the bladder is filled, you will be asked to cough a few times, both to test the equipment calibration and to see the effect of pressure on your bladder function. Once your bladder capacity is reached, bladder filling will stop and you may be asked to cough again. Following this, you will then be asked to empty your bladder by passing urine (with the catheters in place) into the uroflowmeter while sitting on a commode. The catheters will then be removed and you will then be asked to change into your normal clothing. If you are unable to empty your bladder satisfactorily at the end of the test, it may be necessary to do so with the help of a catheter. The test usually involves the use of ultrasound and gynaecological examination.

Is it painful?

Aside from minimal discomfort, the test is not painful, therefore anaesthetics is not involved.

How long does it take?

The test takes around 40mins to complete but it is advisable to allow a minimum of one hour for it.

What can go wrong with the test?

The test is generally safe. There is always a very small risk of urine infection from catheter insertion. To prevent this, you are advised to drink a little more than normal and empty your bladder frequently for about 48hours following the test.

What do I need to do prior to the test?

Endeavour to keep a record of your bladder activities for 3 consecutive days using the diary on the next page.