

**Patient  
Information**

# Tests for urinary flow rate with ultrasound bladder scan

## Introduction

This leaflet gives you information about having a urinary flow rate test followed by an ultrasound bladder scan.

## What is a urine flow rate test and ultrasound bladder scan?

A urine flow rate measures the rate and volume (amount) of urine which is passed into a specially designed toilet. You will not feel any pain when you have the test.

An ultrasound bladder scan measures the amount of urine stored in the bladder. It can be carried out before passing urine and/or after passing urine to check how well the bladder has emptied.

## Why is it important to attend this clinic?

Your urologist or healthcare professional has requested a urinary flow rate test so that they can get information about your urine flow and your bladder function. This information will help them to make a diagnosis and plan your treatment.

## Preparing for your flow rate appointment

A frequency/volume chart will be attached to your appointment letter. Please fill in this chart for 3 days, between now and your appointment date.

You will be asked to record:

- The amount of fluid you drink in a day.
- What you drink, such as tea, coffee or water.
- How many times you pass urine in a day.
- The amount of urine you pass each time (we ask you to record this by using a measuring jug to measure the amount of urine you pass).
- If you have leaked urine into your clothes, by using the words wet or damp.

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Department

**Gloucestershire  
Continence  
Service**

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Below is an example of how to complete the chart:

Time	Drinks		Urine output	Bladder sensation	Pads
	Amount	Type			
6am Woke			350ml	2	
7am	300ml	Tea			
8am			✓	2	
9am					
10am	Cup	Water	Leak	3	✓

It is important that you fill in this chart as truthfully as you can because it will give us information about how your bladder is working.

### **Remember to take the completed chart with you to the appointment.**

It will be helpful if you can come to clinic with a comfortably full bladder. Do not worry if you are unable to do this as you can start drinking fluids to fill up your bladder when you arrive. Water will be available in the clinic.

If you urgently need to pass urine, please tell the reception staff. They will contact the clinic nurse specialist who will show you to the specially adapted toilet.

### **How is the test carried out?**

You will meet with a nurse specialist who will ask you some questions about your bladder symptoms. They will also ask for the completed frequency/volume chart.

You will be able to discuss any concerns or worries that you may have with the nurse specialist. The nurse will explain about the test and what to expect.

You will be shown to the specially adapted toilet and asked to pass urine. This will measure and record the speed and amount of urine you pass (flow rate).

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After you have performed your flow rate, you will have a bladder ultrasound scan. This is to check if there is urine left in your bladder. You will be asked to lie down on a couch and undo your clothing to show your stomach. A small amount of gel will be spread on your stomach before the nurse carries out the ultrasound scan on your bladder. Ultrasound scans are painless and will only take a few minutes.

### **How many times will I have to do this?**

We ask for 2 or 3 separate flow rate tests because this will give a complete picture of your normal flow rate. You will need to drink enough fluids to fill your bladder 2 or 3 times.

### **How long does the appointment take?**

The time taken for the test will vary for each person but you should allow about 2 hours when planning your visit.

We will review your situation if you struggle to pass urine 2 or 3 times during the appointment.

### **Will other people be in the clinic?**

The consultation will be carried out in a private clinic room and you will be alone when passing urine. There will be other people in clinic having urinary flow rate tests.

### **Results**

Once the test has been completed, the results will be sent to the urologist or healthcare professional who requested the test.

You may receive a letter explaining the results of your test. If not, the results will be discussed with you at your follow up appointment. This is normally no longer than 6 weeks after the flow rate test.

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## Contact information

If you are unable to attend or wish to change your appointment, please contact the:

### Gloucestershire Bladder and Bowel Health

Tel: 0300 422 5304

Alternatively, you can contact the Continence Service via the Gloucestershire Hospitals Switchboard.

### Gloucestershire Hospitals Switchboard

Tel: 0300 422 2222

When prompted ask for operator then for the Continence Service.

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## Making a choice

### Shared Decision Making

If you are asked to make a choice, you may have lots of questions that you want to ask. You may also want to talk over your options with your family or friends. It can help to write a list of the questions you want answered and take it to your appointment.



### Ask 3 Questions

To begin with, try to make sure you get the answers to three key questions if you are asked to make a choice about your healthcare.

1. What are my options?
2. What are the pros and cons of each option for me?
3. How do I get support to help me make a decision that is right for me?

These resources have been adapted with kind permission from the MAGIC Programme, supported by the Health Foundation

\* Ask 3 Questions is based on Shepherd HL, et al. These questions that patients can ask to improve the quality of information physicians give about treatment options: A cross-over trial. Patient Education and Counselling, 2011;84: 379-85