

# What is the Hydrogen Breath Test?

**Hydrogen Breath Tests** (or HBT) are used as a means for clinicians to assess people various digestive disorders to see if they can help narrow down what may be causing the digestive issues such as, Small Intestinal Bacterial Overgrowth and/or common food intolerances. The test is simple, non-invasive, and is performed after a short period of fasting (typically 12 hours). The test itself does not diagnose, that is left up to interpretation by a medical professional.

When testing for conditions like Lactose Intolerance, Fructose Intolerance and Small Intestinal Bacterial Overgrowth (SIBO). Studies have demonstrated the importance of Hydrogen (H<sub>2</sub>) and Methane (CH<sub>4</sub>) production, indicating more than 30% of healthy adult subjects produce Methane in addition to or instead of Hydrogen increasing the ability for medical professionals to review the most comprehensive results to best aid them in their decision of how to best relieve patients gastrointestinal disorders/symptoms

**Small Intestinal Bacterial Overgrowth (SIBO):** Like the name suggests, SIBO is where bacteria enter your normally sterile small intestine and begin to colonize. Studies have indicated that potentially up to 80% of patients with IBS may in fact have SIBO which a Hydrogen/Methane Breath Test can easily and non-invasively help determine. Treatment of SIBO can be done with a short course of antibiotics provided by your medical professional.

Common symptoms and reasons to test for SIBO: nausea, flatulence, diarrhea, constipation, malnutrition, Irritable Bowel Syndrome (IBS), Irritable Bowel Disease (IBD), Leaky Gut Syndrome, Chronic Fatigue Syndrome, Acid Reflux, Rosacea, Restless Leg Syndrome (RLS), Fibromyalgia, Gastroesophageal Reflux Disease (GERD), Celiac Disease & Diverticulitis.

**Lactose Intolerance (Lactose Malabsorption):** Lactose intolerant individuals have insufficient levels of an enzyme called lactase. Lactase breaks apart lactose into Glucose and Galactose which can then be absorbed in your digestive system. When you lack this enzyme, the body cannot break down the lactose allowing it to make it to the stomach where bacteria flora break it down causing symptoms like bloating, cramps, diarrhea and nausea.

## Patient Preparation for Breath Tests

Patient Preparation Guidelines for all Hydrogen/Methane Breath Tests

Any questions related to preparation should be discussed with a medical professional.

If you (the patient) are not able to comply with these guidelines for testing, then you may not be a candidate for a breath test and your medical professional can assist you in determining if another test without these preparation limits is more suitable.

- No smoking, including second-hand smoke, for at least 1 hour before or at any time during the breath test.
- No sleeping or vigorous exercise for at least 1 hour before or at any time during the breath test.
- Wait at least 14 days before beginning your breath test if you recently had antibiotic therapy, runny diarrhea, colonoscopies, barium studies or enemas.

### Small Intestine Bacterial Overgrowth Test (SIBO)

Nothing to eat or drink after midnight the evening before the test. Avoid slowly absorbed carbohydrates (like bread and potato) the evening prior to testing.

Please brush your teeth and rinse mouth with antiseptic mouth wash and tap water before coming to the office for your test.

No smoking or exercise 2 hours prior to the test.

Pro-motility (diarrhea medications) drugs should be avoided 48 hours prior to the test.

No antibiotics 2 weeks prior to testing.

**The test is 2 hours.**

### Breath Hydrogen Test (Lactose)

No antibiotics taken within 2 weeks of test.

Nothing to eat or drink after midnight the night before the test.

Day of the test no gum, no mints.

No smoking 2 hours prior to the test.

No beans 24 hours before the test (green, brown, lentil, kidney, black, etc.)

No colon cleansing 30 days prior to the test.

No toothpaste/No mouthwash day of procedure.

**This test may take up to 3 hours, please feel free to bring reading material, IPOD with ear phones, etc.**