

## pH Probe Testing for Gastroesophageal Reflux

A pH probe test is done to diagnose gastroesophageal reflux, or GER. It is a common cause of breathing problems, vomiting and poor weight gain in infants and children.

The pH probe is a small plastic tube with a sensor device on the end. It goes through the nose, down the back of the throat and into the esophagus, just above the stomach. The probe may be left in place for about 24 hours. It measures the amount of acid in the esophagus.

### What to Expect

Your child will spend the night in the hospital. Bring your child's pajamas, favorite toys and anything else he or she likes to sleep with.

When you arrive, a nurse will ask you questions about your child's health and check your child's weight, height, temperature, pulse, breathing rate and blood pressure. Then a technician will be called to put in the pH probe. Once it is in, your child's hands may be wrapped in something like a cloth mitten. If needed, this is done to prevent your child from pulling out the probe. Part of your child's back will be cleaned with alcohol. A patch with a tiny, plastic-coated tube attached to it will be taped to your child's back. Another plastic-coated tube will be put into your child's nose and advanced to the top of the stomach. One end of the tube will be taped to your child's cheek. It may hurt a little as the tube is put in, but once it is in place, it should not bother your child. Both of these tubes (the one on the back and the one in the nose) look like long pieces of spaghetti. The tubes are attached to a recording box that is the size of a small radio. The box records the amount of acid.

The technician will give you a logbook and show you how to record:

- When your child eats
- His or her sleeping position
- Coughing or other breathing problems
- Activity levels

During the test your child will be taken to x-ray. The x-ray is done to make sure the probe is in the right place. When the x-ray is finished, your child may return to the room or visit the playroom. When your child goes to sleep, his or her heart rate and oxygen level will be checked during the night. The next day, when the study is finished, we will remove the pH probe and your child will be discharged. Your doctor will call you with the results the next weekday and prescribe medications, if needed.



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