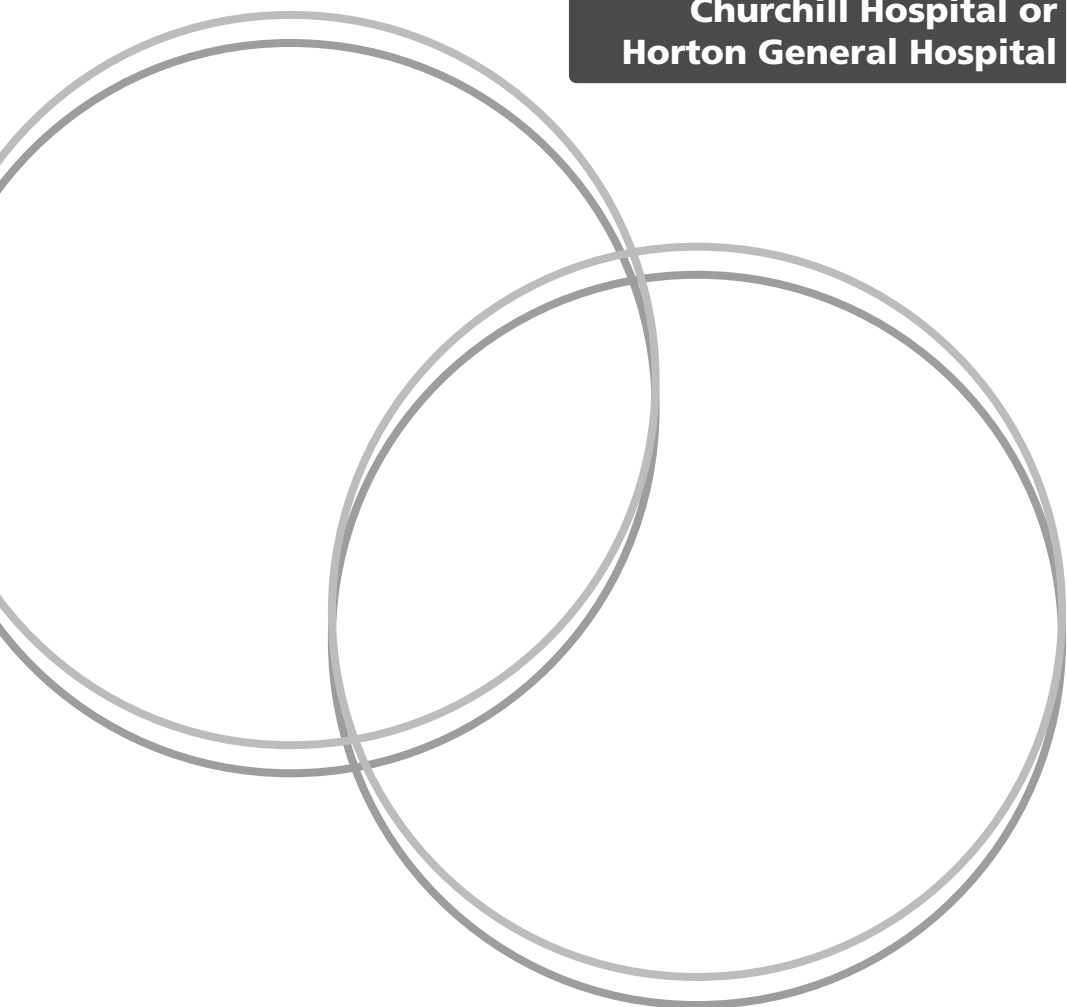




Oxford University Hospitals
NHS Foundation Trust

Urine free flow rate and bladder scanning

**Information for people
attending the Urology
Department at the
Churchill Hospital or
Horton General Hospital**



Why have I been given this leaflet?

You have been given this leaflet because you have been booked for a urine free flow rate test and bladder scan (the appointment for both of these tests is usually referred to as a 'Flow Rate'). This will be done at either the Wytham Urology Outpatient Department at the Churchill Hospital or at the Day Case Unit at the Horton General Hospital.

The flow rate is usually done as part of investigating urinary tract ('waterworks') symptoms such as a slow stream; difficulty passing urine; needing to pass urine very frequently or getting an urgent need to pass urine; urinary incontinence; or any change in your usual flow of urine.

We need to ask for your consent – or permission – to undertake the Flow Rate – it is your choice whether you agree or not.

What does a urine free flow rate show?

This measures how much urine you pass and how quickly the urine flows. During normal urination your urine stream begins slowly, speeds up and then finally slows down again. The flow meter can record any differences from this pattern.

What does a bladder scan show?

A bladder scan shows how well you have emptied your bladder after passing urine, or whether there is any urine still left in your bladder.

Preparing for your flow rate

For an accurate free flow recording you should have a **comfortably full bladder** before passing urine. This is usually the same feeling you would have when you normally go to the toilet at home. If possible please drink around 5 cups of fluid in the 2-3 hour period before your appointment time so that you are ready to pass urine when you arrive. It is better for you to feel ready to pass urine before you do the test, because we want to record a typical flow for you.

You may have been asked to bring in a urine sample to your appointment. If possible please collect this 2 hours before your appointment so that you have time to drink and for your bladder to fill before your flow rate.

How long does it all take?

It is not possible to say how long the test and scan will take, as everyone takes a different amount of time to get a full bladder. Sometimes the flow rate will need to be carried out more than once, which means you will have to drink more fluid so your bladder fills up again. You should expect to be in the hospital for 2-4 hours.

Arriving at your appointment with a full bladder will reduce your waiting time. Depending on your symptoms, and how long your journey to hospital is, you may feel more comfortable having your drinks when you arrive at the hospital. Please then come to the department at your appointment time.

What happens during the appointment?

Please report to the Reception desk and, after checking you in, the receptionist will ask if you feel ready to pass urine. If you are not ready they will ask you to take a seat and have some more to drink. If you become uncomfortable from the urge to pass urine please inform the receptionist so they can get you seen as soon as possible.

If you are ready to pass urine when you arrive, the receptionist will ask the nurse or nursing assistant to take you to the flow rate room. You will be asked to pass urine into a commode toilet or a funnel that is connected to a meter that records your flow. You will be left in private.

After you have passed urine you will be asked to lie down on a couch so your bladder can be scanned to see if there is any urine still left. This is not an internal examination. A small amount of gel is put on the lower part of your tummy and an ultrasound probe slides over the skin to produce a picture of your bladder which will show if there is any urine in it. This takes less than 5 minutes.

What can I do to help get an accurate result?

We understand that the flow rate room is not your normal toilet but there are a few things you can do to help get a test result that best matches your usual urinating pattern at home.

- Make sure you feel ready to pass urine before taking the test.
- Pass urine in your usual preferred position – for men, if you usually sit to void then please tell the nurse.
- Relax and, if possible, try not to strain when passing urine, take your time and do not feel rushed.
- Do not put any paper into the commode toilet.
- Try to avoid knocking the flow machine.
- Men should avoid moving the urine stream around the funnel or squeezing the penis, as this may affect the flow rate measurement.

What will happen when the flow rate is completed?

You may be having your flow rate appointment before seeing a doctor or nurse specialist. If this is the case they will discuss the results with you. The results will help them to make decisions about any further investigations, treatment or surgery you may need.

If the flow rate was arranged after seeing a doctor or nurse specialist then they will usually write to you with the results or arrange a further clinic appointment to discuss the results with you.

Further information

Bladder and Bowel Community

Website: www.bladderandbowel.org

British Association of Urological Surgeons

Website: www.baus.org.uk/patients

How to contact us

If you are unable to come for your appointment or have a query about your appointment time please contact the admin team:

Tel: **01865 234 444**

(8.00am to 5.00pm, Monday to Friday)

If your query is clinical the admin team will put you through to a clinical member of staff.

Further Information

Please speak to the department where you are being seen if you would like an interpreter. You will find their contact details on your appointment letter. Please also ask them if you would like this information leaflet in another format, such as:

- easy read
- large print
- braille
- audio
- electronically
- in another language.

We have tried to make this information meet your needs. If it does not meet your individual needs or situation, please speak to your healthcare team. They will be happy to help.

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