

Durham VA Health Care System  
508 Fulton Street  
Durham NC, 27705  
GI Suite Clinic 111E  
919-286-6945

## GI Clinic Manometry Appointment letter

Dear \_\_\_\_\_,

1. You are scheduled to have an esophageal manometry study at the Durham VA Medical Center, GI Clinic. We are located on the Ground Floor of the hospital, between the MRI department and the Eye Clinic.
2. This procedure is scheduled for \_\_\_\_\_ at: \_\_\_\_\_
3. You may come alone to this appointment. The study and appointment may last about 1 hour.
4. This procedure requires you follow a special diet:
  - a. **Do not eat or drink 6 hours before your appointment:** \_\_\_\_\_
5. If you have any questions regarding your appointment, please call the GI Clinic.  
**LODGING:** Lodging can be requested by patients who live greater than 75 miles from the VA Hospital and have **an appointment at 10:00 AM or earlier**. If you would like to request lodging contact the GI clinic at 919-286-0411 ext. 6945 and speak with someone and/or ask to speak our manometry nurses. **Please make arrangements at least 48 hours in advance.**

### What is esophageal manometry?

Esophageal manometry is a test used to measure the function of the lower esophageal sphincter (the valve that prevents reflux of gastric acid into the esophagus) and the muscles of the esophagus. This test will tell your doctor if your esophagus is able to move food to your stomach normally.

The manometry test is commonly given to people who have:

- Difficulty swallowing
- Pain when swallowing
- Heartburn
- Chest pain

### **The swallowing and digestive processes**

When you swallow, food moves down your esophagus and into your stomach in a wave-like motion called peristalsis. Disruptions in this wave-like motion may cause chest pain or problems with swallowing. Also, the muscular valve connecting the esophagus with the stomach, called

***Please see back***

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the esophageal sphincter prevents food and acid from backing up out of the stomach into the esophagus. If this valve does not work properly, food and stomach acids can enter the esophagus and cause a condition called gastroesophageal reflux disease (GERD). Manometry will indicate not only how well the esophagus is able to move food down the esophagus but also how well the esophageal sphincter is working to prevent reflux.

**Before the test**

Tell the physician if you have a lung or heart condition, have any other diseases, or have allergies to any medications.

**Day of test**

- Do not eat or drink anything 6 hours before the test.

**During the test**

- You are not sedated. However, a topical anesthetic (pain-relieving medication) will be applied to your nose to make the passage of the tube more comfortable.
- A small, flexible tube is passed through your nose, down your esophagus and into your stomach. This tube is about 4 mm in diameter and does not interfere with your breathing. You will be sitting up on a stretcher while the tube is inserted.
- You may feel some discomfort as the tube is being placed, but it only takes a few minutes to place the tube. Most patients quickly adjust to the tube's presence. Vomiting and coughing are possible when the tube is being placed, but are rare.
- The end of the tube exiting your nose is then connected to a machine that records the pressure in your esophagus. During the test, you will be asked to swallow small amounts of saline. You will perform approximately 10 saline swallows.
- You will also be tested with small amounts of saline followed by rapid swallows.
- The test lasts 10 to 15 minutes. When the test is over, the tube is removed. The gastroenterologist will interpret the recordings that were made during the test.

**After the test**

- Your physician will notify you when the test results are available or will discuss the results with you at your next scheduled appointment.
- You may resume your normal diet and activities and any medications that were withheld for this test.
- You may feel a temporary soreness in your throat. Lozenges or gargling with salt water may help.
- If you think you may be experiencing any unusual symptoms or side effects, call the VA GI clinic from 8:00AM -4:30PM at 919-286-6945. If there is an emergency after clinic hours call the VA operator 919-286-0411 and ask to speak with the GI doctor on call.