

Anorectal Physiology Tests

These tests are designed to measure the strength of the muscles around your bottom and the sensation inside your bottom.

These tests are frequently recommended to investigate patients who are complaining of faecal incontinence, rectal prolapse, constipation or symptoms of obstructed defaecation.

Do I need any preparation beforehand?

These are quick and simple tests. They are painless and do not require any sedation or anaesthetic. You do not need to take any laxatives before these tests.

What do the tests involve?

You will be asked to lie on an examination couch on your left side with your knees bent. Anal pressure measurements are taken by introducing a small tube into your bottom. You will be asked to relax and then to squeeze the muscles in your back passage. You will also be asked to cough. The pressure measurements are recorded and analysed. The second part of the test involves using the balloon attached to the tube. This part of the test is not painful. The balloon is slowly inflated until it can be felt and within the back passage.

You will be asked questions about when you can feel it. The same balloon is also used to measure a reflex that relaxes the anal muscles.

Ano-rectal physiological tests are often carried out at the same time as an endo-anal ultrasound scan.

What happens afterwards?

The whole testing procedure including the scan takes around 30 minutes. You will be able to go home straight afterwards and you can continue with all normal activities.

The physiologist will analyse the results and a full report will be sent to your consultant.