

Methane Breath CH₄ECK™

A new, quick, and simple test for the detection of intestinal methanogen overgrowth (IMO) – a potential cause for bloating

Information for patients



What is a Methane Breath CH₄ECK™ test?

The Methane Breath CH₄ECK™ is a test that can identify an abnormal growth of microorganisms in the gut called methanogens. Methanogens produce methane gas and excessive methane production is a potential cause of bloating.

Around half of the population have methanogens in their gut, but in some people they can overgrow. We call this intestinal methanogen overgrowth (IMO). In addition to bloating, IMO is associated with belching, flatulence, nausea, and constipation.

This breath test detects methane gas produced by methanogens in the intestinal tract. The methane is absorbed into the bloodstream and transported to the lungs where it is exhaled, and it can then be collected in breath samples for analysis. The Methane Breath CH₄ECK™ will tell you how much methane is being produced and if you have IMO.

How is the test performed?

The Methane Breath CH₄ECK™ is very simple. Your test will contain two breath collection tubes. A breath sample is given by blowing into one tube through the straw provided for around 3-5 seconds. Then this is repeated for the second tube.

What preparation is required for your Methane Breath CH₄ECK™?

For 12 hours before your test

- ✗ You must stop eating and drinking and fast for 12 hours before your test.

On the day of your test

- ✓ You can have small sips of water before your test.
- ✓ You may take your essential medicines with a small amount of water.
- ✓ You may brush your teeth, but please try not to swallow any toothpaste.
- ✗ You should not eat anything in the morning before your test.
- ✗ Do not eat, drink (except water), chew gum, smoke, eat breath mints and/or other sweets in the morning before your test.
- i If you are diabetic requiring insulin or diabetes medicine, please ask your doctor if you should change your morning dose. Oral hypoglycaemic medicines are usually not taken that morning until completion of the test and you start eating again.

Frequently asked questions (FAQs)

How do I prepare for the test?

The only thing you need to do is a 12-hour overnight fast before providing the breath samples. For example, if you eat your last piece of food at 8pm, then you can provide your breath samples at 8am the following morning. Water and teeth brushing are allowed during the 12-hour fast window.

Do I need to stop any medications before the test?

No, you do not need to stop any medications before the test. Although, recent use of antibiotics may influence the test result, so it is recommended to wait at least 4 weeks until after you have completed any antibiotics.

Are there any risks associated with your test?

There are no risks involved in performing the test.

Why do I have to give two breath samples?

You must give two breath samples in case one of the samples is invalid. In the rare occurrence that both samples are invalid, we will send you another test out free of charge.

How long are the samples valid for?

The breath samples are valid for up to two weeks. We recommend that you return the breath samples in the provided free returns envelope on the same day of your test and ask for proof of postage at the counter.

How will I get my results?

Your results will be sent by secure email. We aim to send out all results within 48-hours of your test arriving back to us.

What if my test is positive?

You will be sent an information guide along with the results of your test with the potential next steps. If you are positive for IMO and believe it may be contributing to your symptoms, then seeking help from a healthcare professional is advised.





Manchester

73-79 King Street
9th Floor – The Pinnacle
Manchester
M2 4NG

T: +44 (0) 161 302 7777

E: admin@functionalgutdiagnostics.com

functionalgutdiagnostics.com



FunctionalGut



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