

# Let's Talk About...

## pH Probe Study: Acid reflux test

### What is a pH probe study?

A pH probe is a study of the acid levels in your child's esophagus. It helps healthcare providers see if your child has acid reflux and how best to treat it.

### Why does my child need a pH probe study?

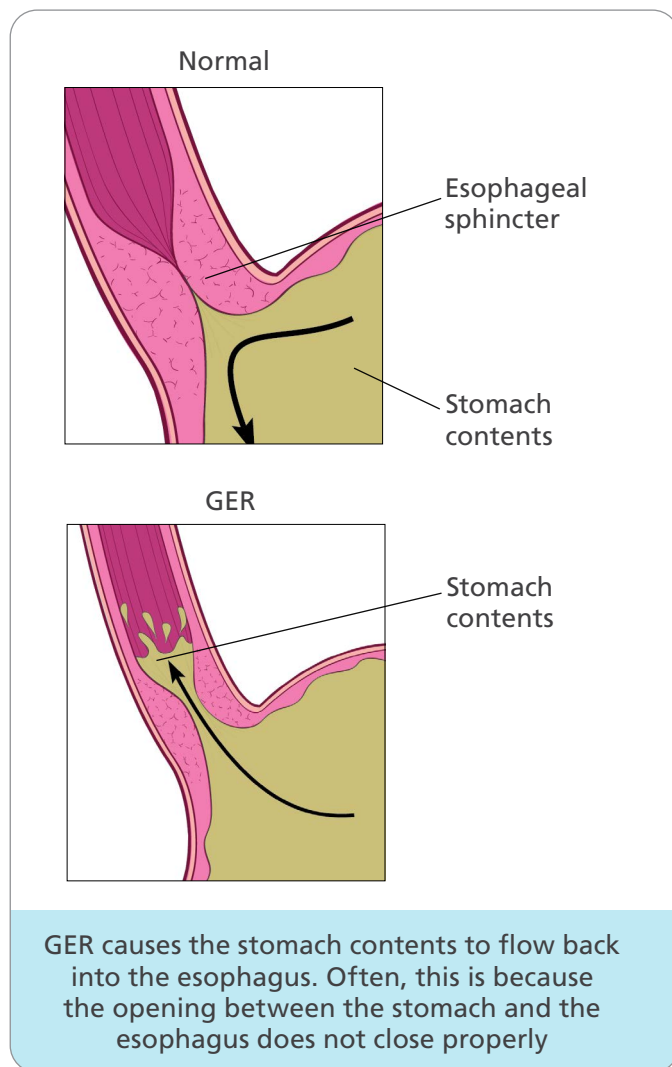
A pH test measures a substance for acid and gives it a ranking from 1 (very strong) to 7 (very weak, or neutral). Your child may need a pH probe study to see if they have acid reflux, or **Gastroesophageal** [GAS-tro-ee-soff-uh-JEE-al] **reflux (GER)**. Reflux is when the contents of the stomach flow back up into the esophagus [eh-SOFF-eh-gus] (food tube). This can be normal.

**Gastroesophageal reflux disease**, or **GERD**, is caused by having too much stomach acid. The acid can make your child's esophagus sore and make them vomit. If it gets into their mouth or lungs, it can cause breathing problems, hoarseness, or lung infections.

A pH probe allows the healthcare provider to see reflux as it is happening. It can also help identify changes that increase or decrease reflux. This may help them decide which treatment would be most helpful.

### How do I prepare my child for a pH probe study?

Tell your child's healthcare provider about any medicine your child takes, especially reflux medicine. Your child may need to stop taking their medicine 1 week before the pH probe study. They should not eat or drink anything for 1 hour before the test.



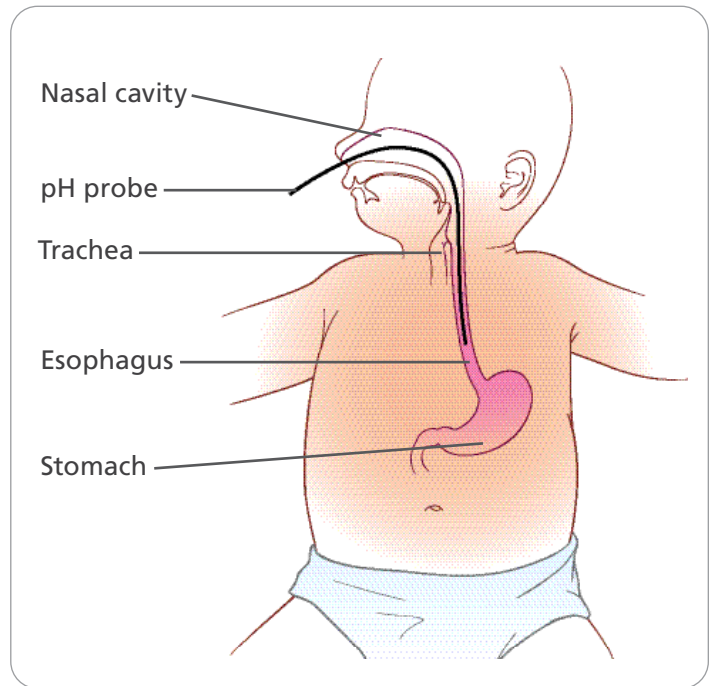
See more on page 2.

## What happens during a pH probe study?

- A healthcare provider puts a tiny tube (probe) in your child's nose and carefully moves it down into their esophagus. They will take an x-ray of your child's chest to make sure the tube is in the right spot.

Your child may cough, sneeze, or gag for a few minutes while getting used to the probe. Help your child relax by soothing them with a calm voice and a soft touch. This will help keep the probe in place. If it comes out, a healthcare provider will have to put it back in.

- The probe is attached to a small monitor that measures pH levels in the esophagus every 30 minutes. The healthcare provider records the acid levels and whether your child is crying, coughing, or vomiting.
- The doctor will determine what and how often your child should eat, or what medicines they should or should not take, during the study.
- The probe will be in your child's esophagus for 24 hours, so your child may need to stay in the hospital overnight. They can wear the monitor on their shoulder in its holder and play quietly or watch TV while it records pH levels. Your child can also sleep with the monitor.



## What happens after the pH probe study?

After 24 hours, your child's healthcare provider will remove the probe, and your child can go home. They can eat and drink as usual, but they may have a sore throat or feel tired after the test. The healthcare provider will call you to talk about the results of the pH probe study in a few days.

### Notes

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