

**Issue: H-Pylori Breath Test Management**

Raised by: Manager, Western Diagnostic Pathology (WDP)

Background: Helicobacter Pylori breath test (PYTest) kits are available to Remote health centres and can be ordered from WDP.

Tests should only to be used for confirmation of Helicobacter pylori colonisation or for monitoring the success of eradication of Helicobacter pylori. These uses attract Medicare item [#12533](#). The 13C urea breath test should not be used for H. pylori screening.

Discussion: Test results can be compromised if the client is not adequately prepared or if the shelf life of the test kit has been exceeded.

Adequate preparation for the H-pylori breath tests involves a minimum 4 hour fast and may include modifying medications. See [Urea Breath Tests](#) for 'Exclusion Periods for Medications that may interfere with the 13c Urea Breath Test'. Simplified [PYTest instructions](#) can be found on the kits.

In optimal storage conditions the kits have an average shelf life of one year. If storage is not optimal, the shelf life can be significantly shortened. The test kits cost \$22.00 each.

In view of the infrequent use of these tests, the limited shelf life and cost reasons, WDP purchase a box of 1000 nationally, and distribute across their company. Each laboratory only keep approx 5 kits in stock for dispatch on request, once a decision has been made to do the test and preparation of the client has commenced.

Remote Health acknowledges that the reasons WDP limit stock holdings should equally be regarded at health centre level. This, coupled with the need to ensure adequate patient preparation prior to testing, means it is recommended that test kits are not routinely stocked in health centres, but are ordered from WDP when required.

Consultation: Western Diagnostic Pathology Operations Manager - Northern Territory

References: [Western Diagnostic Pathology – Urea Breath Test](#),
[PYTest instructions](#) (note that these instructions can also be found under the Reference Menu in PCIS).

Outcome: **H-Pylori test kits should not be routinely stocked in health centres.**

They should only be ordered from regional WDP stores once the decision has been made to conduct the test and client preparation is planned.