

Bravo pH Monitoring: Frequently Asked Questions

Q: What is Bravo pH monitoring?

A: Bravo pH monitoring is a medical procedure in which a wireless pH monitoring capsule is temporarily attached to the esophagus to collect data for up to 96 hours for the diagnosis of acid reflux for classification of GERD.

Q. What is GERD?

A: Gastroesophageal reflux disease, or GERD, occurs when the lower esophageal sphincter (LES) muscle malfunctions or does not close properly and stomach acid leaks back into the esophagus causing a burning sensation in the chest or throat. This acid can irritate and sometimes damage the delicate lining on the inside of the esophagus. The most common symptom is heartburn, an uncomfortable burning sensation behind the breastbone, most commonly occurring after a meal. Complications of severe or chronic GERD include inflammation, ulcers and bleeding of the esophagus. Over time, scarring or narrowing of the esophagus may occur. A precancerous condition, Barrett's esophagus, may also develop as a complication of GERD. An estimated 61 million Americans, or 44% of the US adult population, have heartburn at least once a month, and more than 19 million people suffer from GERD and experience symptoms at least twice a week. GERD is the third most prevalent disease in the US, but most GERD sufferers are not screened for more serious disease.

Q: How does the Bravo procedure work?

A: Step 1 – The GI positions the Bravo pH capsule in the esophagus using an endoscope.

Step 2 – Suction is applied to attach the capsule to the wall of the esophagus.

Step 3 – Once the capsule is attached, the delivery system is removed and the capsule begins transmitting pH data to the receiver attached to the patient.

Q: How long is the Bravo procedure?

A: The Bravo capsule is placed in the esophagus at the physician's office or in an endoscopy center. Once positioned in the esophagus, the capsule remains in place for up to 96 hours. After the procedure, the disposable pH capsule naturally detaches and passes through the digestive system.

Q: How long is the recovery time for the Bravo procedure?

A: There is no specific recovery time for the Bravo procedure. However, the Bravo capsule is often placed endoscopically, and upper endoscopy requires preparation, sedation and a brief recovery period.

Q: What size is the capsule?

A: The capsule is approximately the size of a gel cap.

Q: How is the Bravo capsule removed from the body?

A: The Bravo capsule is disposable and makes its way through the gastrointestinal tract and is then passed naturally and painlessly from the body.

Q: What is pH monitoring?

A: Esophageal pH monitoring is a test that measures how often and for how long stomach acid enters the esophagus, the tube that leads from the mouth to the stomach.

Q: What is pH?

A: pH is a measurement of acidity or basicity.

Q: How does Bravo compare with other pH monitoring procedures?

A: According to the position statement issued by the AGA , wireless pH monitoring has superior sensitivity to catheter studies for detecting pathological esophageal acid exposure¹. Other technologies require the patient to wear a catheter for 24 hours through their nose which makes eating, sleeping and drinking uncomfortable and embarrassing.

Q: Is Bravo pH monitoring a good solution for everyone?

A: No, Bravo pH monitoring is not for everyone. Risks include: premature detachment, discomfort, failure to detach, tears in the mucosa, bleeding, and perforation. Endoscopic or transnasal placement may present additional risks. Medical, endoscopic, or surgical intervention may be necessary to address any of these complications, should they occur.