

# HOW TO TEST FOR LOW STOMACH ACID

You might be wondering how to test for low stomach acid. There are actually several options.

## 1 THE HEIDELBERG TEST

The Heidelberg test involves swallowing a vitamin-sized capsule containing a pH meter and radio transmitter. You will need to fast overnight (8 hours) before the procedure, and you will drink a solution of water and bicarbonate of soda when you swallow the capsule, which normally stimulates the release of stomach acid. You will be required to recline for approximately 30-40 minutes. The fluctuations in pH are plotted on a graph, called a gastrogram. Many doctors' offices that perform this test allow you the option of having the capsule removed by means of a thin attached string, or just passing it through the digestive tract and eliminating it with a bowel movement.

The Heidelberg test has been used for over 30 years. Well over a million capsules have been used to date. A major area of use is in pharmaceutical research. There have been over 143 published clinical studies with over 73 pertinent studies published since 1977.

The Heidelberg Gastric Analysis test is considered one of the most accurate tests. However, it's fairly expensive.

## 2 THE GASTRO STRING TEST

The Gastro String test is less expensive than the Heidelberg test, but not quite as accurate. The string test involves swallowing a gel capsule containing pH string. You hold one end of the string and swallow the capsule, which makes its way into the stomach where the capsule dissolves and the pH string unfolds. After 10 to 15 minutes, the string is pulled out of the stomach and out of the mouth by gently pulling on the end you are holding.

The end that was in the stomach is compared to a color key to measure the pH. It should be in the acid range. Neutral pH is a sign of hypochlorhydria. This may also be combined with a baking soda challenge.

Above information from: <https://www.jonbarron.org/article/test-your-stomach-acid>

## 3 THE BAKING SODA STOMACH ACID TEST

The baking soda stomach acid test is a safe, low-cost test that is easy to do at home. Your stomach acid produces hydrochloric acid (HCL), which is involved in digesting your food. The idea is that the baking soda solution you will drink reacts with the HCL in your stomach to produce carbon dioxide gas. The amount of gas produced depends on the quantity of acid contained in your stomach. The rationale is that if your stomach is producing enough stomach acid, you'll experience burping within a few minutes. If your body takes longer to react to the baking soda, you might have inadequate HCL levels. This is not the most accurate test though so it's recommended that those who try the baking soda test, whether or not they pass or fail also try the HCL Dosing Challenge Test as well.

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## HERE ARE SOME SIMPLE DIRECTIONS TO TAKE THE BAKING SODA STOMACH ACID TEST:

1. Perform this test first thing in the morning on an empty stomach (before eating or drinking)
2. Dissolve ¼ teaspoon of baking soda into an 8 oz glass of cold water
3. Drink the baking soda solution and start timing up to 5 minutes
4. Record the time until you first burp up gas
5. Perform this test for 5 consecutive days (or longer) at the same time each day to give a better estimation of your stomach's acidity

DAY	TIME UNTIL FIRST BURP
1	
2	
3	
4	
5	
6	
7	
8	
9	
10	

- < 2 min: indicates normal acidity
- 2-5 min: low-normal acidity
- > 5 min: possible hypochlorhydria

In theory, if your stomach is producing adequate amounts of stomach acid, you'll likely belch within 2-3 minutes. Early and repeated belching may be due to excessive stomach acid (but don't confuse these burps with small little burps from swallowing air when drinking the solution). Any belching after 3 minutes can indicate a low acid level.