

Short Synacthen Test

Your doctor has recommended that you have a Short Synacthen Test.

The aim of this leaflet is to provide you with information about the test so that you understand why it is being done and what to expect.



**Mersey and West Lancashire
Teaching Hospitals**
NHS Trust

Short Synacthen Test

If you need this leaflet in a different language or accessible format please speak to a member of staff who can arrange it for you.

اگر به این بروشور به زبان دیگر یا در قالب دسترس پذیر نیاز دارید، لطفاً با یکی از کارکنان صحبت کنید تا آن را برای شما تهیه کنند.

Jeśli niniejsza ulotka ma być dostępna w innym języku lub formacie, proszę skontaktować się z członkiem personelu, który ją dla Państwa przygotowuje.

Dacă aveți nevoie de această broșură într-o altă limbă sau într-un format accesibil, vă rog să discutați cu un membru al personalului să se ocupe de acest lucru pentru dumneavoastră

如果您需要本传单的其他语言版本或无障碍格式，请联系工作人员为您安排。

إذا احتجت إلى هذه النشرة بلغة أخرى، أو بتيسيق يسهل الوصول إليه، يرجى التحدث إلى أحد الموظفين لترتيب ذلك لك.

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Why do I need to have this test?

The purpose of this test is to ensure that the adrenal glands are working normally. The adrenal glands lie just above the kidneys and produce important hormones including cortisol. The production of cortisol is controlled by another hormone called ACTH.

If the adrenal glands are not producing enough cortisol this can lead to adrenal insufficiency. A one off blood test for cortisol is often not enough to be certain that the adrenal glands are working normally and a 'stimulation test' is frequently required.

Should I fast or stop any medication prior to the test?

You **do not** need to fast for this test. If you are taking hydrocortisone tablets, please take your last dose by 9.00am the day prior to your test. If you take prednisolone or use steroid inhalers or steroid creams, please stop these 24 hours prior to your test. Please bring your steroid tablets to take on completion of the test.

The Oral Contraceptive Pill (OCP) and Hormone Replacement Therapy (HRT) can interfere with the results and may need to be stopped up to 6 weeks before the test. If you do stop the OCP, another form of contraception should be used. Your Endocrinologist should tell you if you need to stop any medication and when to restart it.

What does the test involve?

You will need to attend the hospital for about an hour for this test. The nurse will explain the test and place a cannula (a small tube for blood samples) into a vein to take an initial blood sample for cortisol levels.

You will then have an intramuscular injection in the upper arm of 'Synacthen'. This stimulates the adrenal glands to produce more cortisol (Synacthen is a synthetic version of the natural hormone ACTH).

You will have a further blood test for cortisol after 30 minutes. The cannula will then be removed and you can go home.

How will I find out the results?

Your Endocrinologist will write to your GP with the results of the test. A copy of this letter will usually be sent to you also.

What if I need advice?

We have a secure confidential answer machine available and email service for patients requiring advice from the Endocrinology Specialist Nurse.

Messages will be assessed and returned in priority order.

Further information

You can contact the Endocrinology Specialist Nurse with any questions you may have.

Endocrinology Specialist Nurse

Tel: 07881 928197