

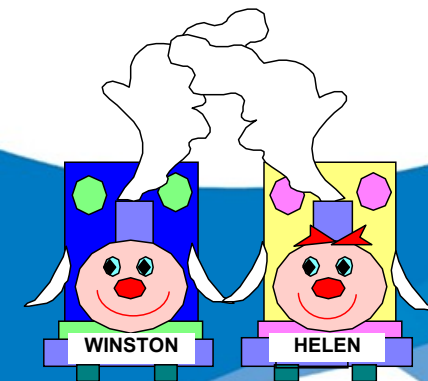
# Low dose Synacthen Test

Paediatric Patient Information Leaflet

This leaflet can be made available  
in alternative languages / formats on request.

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w innych językach/formatach.



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## Nature and Reasons for the Test

The Low dose Synacthen test is used for the diagnosis of reduced adrenal gland function. The principle of the test is to stimulate the adrenal gland with synthetic hormone (Synacthen) to see how much cortisol is made in response. The test involves blood tests and an injection.

Cortisol is one of the essential steroid hormones to keep you healthy. You can be unwell if this hormone is too low or too high. It is usual to have the test in the morning. You will be requested to bring your child to the Children's ward, 4F on the day of the test.

## Preparation

No specific preparation is required for the test. However if your child is currently taking steroid medication, for example prednisolone or cortisone you will be asked to omit any morning dose normally taken. Prior to the test you will be asked about any previous Synacthen tests that your child may have had any previous reactions to the test or any other previous allergic reactions to other medications. If you have had a previous reaction to Synacthen the test will **not** be performed.

## Usual form of Treatment

Your named nurse will introduce herself on arrival and fully explain what to expect during your stay.

The nurse will take your child's temperature, pulse, respiration rate and blood pressure at the beginning of the test and during the test at specific times. This is just to monitor your child's condition throughout the test.

The nurse will also apply a numbing cream to an area on your child's hand or arm about 40 minutes prior to a doctor or nurse clinician inserting a small venflon/cannula into your child's arm. A venflon/cannula is a small tube which can be left in a vein to allow blood samples to be taken without further discomfort.

Your child will be asked to rest for the duration of the test and to help with relaxation a suitable activity of your child's choice will be initiated by the play specialists on the ward.

An initial blood sample will be taken to check the baseline level of cortisol, along with salt and glucose levels in the blood as the cannula is inserted. An injection of Synacthen will then be given into the cannula to stimulate the body to produce cortisol. A blood sample will be taken from the cannula 30 minutes after the injection of Synacthen to measure the cortisol level again.

## Risks and Discomforts of the Test

Allergic reactions to Synacthen can occur occasionally. The doctor or nurse conducting the test will discuss all risks with you prior to the test on an individual basis.

By using the special numbing cream prior to insertion of the intravenous cannula discomfort will be minimized

## What happens after the Test ?

On completion of the test, the venflon/cannula will be removed and your child will be offered refreshments prior to being allowed to go home.

Your Consultant Paediatrician will be informed of the results of the test directly from the laboratory within a few days time. Any management changes will be discussed with the family at a suitable review appointment.