

Head Up Tilt Test (HUTT)

What is it?

Tilt table testing is a test used to assess the causes of fainting. Sometimes it is used to investigate fast heart rates on standing.

Why is it done?

The test is done to see if you have a tendency to faint and if you do, the test is used to find out whether the main cause lies with your pulse rate or your blood pressure. The test can also help diagnose Postural Orthostatic Tachycardia Syndrome (POTS). This is an excessive increase in heart rate when standing up. It typically causes dizziness, fainting, sweating and other symptoms.

What happens during the test?

Please **do not** eat four hours before your appointment time.

After you are called in on cold days, you will be asked to wash your hands with warm water. We need your hands to be warm as it helps to measure your blood pressure using a sensor on a finger.

You will be asked to lie on a bed with a foot board. This bed can be tilted so that you end up in a near standing position, with the foot board to support you. Some ECG (electrocardiogram) electrodes will be connected to your chest, a blood pressure cuff will be placed on your arm and a cuff will be placed on a finger. The cuff on your arm will only need to be used once and the cuff on your finger will pulsate throughout your test as it tracks your blood pressure. It usually takes about five minutes to finish a calibration procedure and for readings to stabilise. Sometimes different cuff sizes or different fingers are tried before the readings are satisfactory.

If your doctor has requested us to perform a carotid sinus massage (CSM) test, this will be done next. This procedure involves massaging the artery in the neck. The sensors in this artery help to regulate your blood pressure and in some people these sensors have become over sensitive. CSM does carry a risk of transient ischemic attack (TIA) or stroke of about 1 in 1000 and your consent is required before this test is carried out. You may choose not to have this part of the test performed. The rest of the tilt test does not carry this risk.

Next, you will be tilted to a near standing position for 40 minutes to see if a faint can be provoked. If you faint before the 40 minutes are over, the bed will be promptly returned to a horizontal position. It is important that during these 40 minutes, you receive as little external stimuli as possible and for this reason no talking or non-verbal communication is allowed during this time. This means the test will be rather boring.

At the end of the test all the equipment will be disconnected and you will be allowed to go home (or the ward if you are an in-patient). The results of the test will be sent to the requesting consultant.

It is advisable to bring somebody with you to your appointment as you might feel dizzy after the test. Some patients prefer to wait in our waiting room or the main atrium before starting the journey home. If you do bring somebody to stay for the duration of the test, this person might want to bring some reading material to help pass the time.

Queen Elizabeth Hospitals

For all appointments in the Outpatients area of the Queen Elizabeth Hospital Birmingham, please enter through the main entrance ① and check in using the self check-in kiosks.

When visiting our hospitals we recommend parking in the following car parks:

For the Queen Elizabeth Hospital Birmingham use Car Park A For the Heritage Building (Queen Elizabeth Hospital) or Nuffield House use Car Park D

If you are using a sat nav, please make sure it has been updated recently. The post code B15 2GW will bring you onto the hospital site. Once on site, please follow road signs to the relevant car park.

Entrances

- ① Outpatients and all wards/departments (QEHB)
- ② West Entrance (All wards and departments, Heritage Building)
- ③ Cancer Centre
- ④ Main Entrance (All wards and departments, Heritage Building)
- ⑤ Institute of Translational Medicine
- ⑥ East Block Day Unit

Key

- Disabled Parking
 - Taxi rank
 - Parking
 - Drop-off only
 - Bus Stop – Centro / West Midlands Travel
 - Shuttle
 - Pedestrian Route
 - Cycle Storage
 - Smoking Shelter
- The free shuttle bus service runs from 07:00–19:00 Monday–Friday (excluding Bank Holidays)
- The shuttle bus is a free service to transport patients and visitors to various locations around the site. The service runs from 07:00–19:00 Monday–Friday (excluding Bank Holidays).

