Overnight Dexamethasone Suppression Test
– information for patients

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Your doctor has recommended that you have an overnight dexamethasone suppression test to check if your body is producing too much of the hormone cortisol.

Cortisol is produced by the adrenal glands which sit above the kidneys. Cortisol production is controlled by the pituitary gland which is a tiny gland underneath the brain. This vital hormone is responsible for enabling your body to respond to stress and illness. Cortisol also regulates your immune system, blood pressure and blood sugar levels.

**Preparation for your test**

- Your doctor or nurse will give you a prescription for dexamethasone 1 mg tablet
- Please take dexamethasone 1 mg tablet at 11:00pm, the night before your blood test
- You can eat and drink as normal

**What will happen during your test?**

- The following morning after taking the dexamethasone tablet, you need to have a blood test (no later than 09:00am)
- Please arrive at the Phlebotomy Department in the Queen Elizabeth Hospital, Birmingham at 08.45am in time for your 9:00am blood test
- You will need to get a ticket from the ticket dispenser for your blood test and hand the blood form (enclosed in this letter or given to you when you attend the clinic) to the phlebotomist
- The Phlebotomy Department is open from Monday-Friday between the hours of 9am – 5pm except bank holidays.
- There are no medical risks associated with this test
What will happen after the test

- The result of your test will be reviewed by the endocrinology doctor
- You do not have to contact the department for your test result as you will be contacted directly if necessary
- Your doctor will also be informed of the result of your test
- If necessary, you will be called back into the clinic to discuss the result especially if you need to start on any treatment
- Sometimes, it is also necessary for us to contact you by telephone, so please provide us with your home and mobile telephone numbers when you come in for your test

Please remember the timing of your endocrine test is important so please report directly to the unit before 09.00am. If you are unable to keep your appointment, please contact the department and we will try to rearrange it for you.
Contact Details

Please report to the following location for your test:

Phlebotomy Department
Area 1A, Outpatient Department
Ground Floor, Queen Elizabeth Hospital Birmingham
Mindelsohn Way, Edgbaston, Birmingham B15 2GW

If you have any queries please contact;
Endocrine Clinical Nurse Specialist Team
Email: EndocrineNurses@uhb.nhs.uk   Tel: 0121 371 6950

If your call is not answered please leave a voicemail message stating your name, hospital number, contact number and your query. A member of the nurse team will return your call.

The Trust provides free monthly health talks on a variety of medical conditions and treatments. For more information visit www.uhb.nhs.uk/health-talks.htm or call 0121 371 4323.

Endocrine
Queen Elizabeth Hospital Birmingham
Mindelsohn Way, Edgbaston
Birmingham B15 2GW
Telephone: 0121 627 2000