Corticotropin Releasing Hormone (CRH) Test

Your doctor has recommended that you have a CRH test to measure some very specialised hormones in your body (the adrenocorticotropic hormone (ACTH) and cortisol). This test involves us giving you an injection of a corticotropin releasing hormone (CRH) followed by a series of blood sampling. The purpose of this test is to help us to find out if your pituitary gland is causing an imbalance of steroid hormones in your body, known as Cushing's disease.

Preparation for the test

- You should not eat anything from 11pm the night before your test.
- You can take all your usual medications on the day of the test with minimal water.
- Please bring all your usual medications with you to the test. The nurse will document these, and you will normally be allowed to take your medications at the end of the test. The test will last for at least 3 hours.
- Please come to Endocrine Day Case Unit at 08.30 am on the morning of the test.
- Children are advised not to attend. However, if this poses a particular problem for you please discuss this with us.

What will happen during the test?

- A nurse will insert a cannula which is a small plastic tube used to take blood samples into a vein in your arm.
- You will be given an injection of a hormone through this cannula. This may cause you to feel a 'flushing sensation' for a few seconds, other reactions are very unusual (i.e. feeling nauseated and sickness).
- A series of blood samples will be taken over a period of approximately two hours.
- If you have diabetes, this test may cause a temporary rise in your blood glucose levels for a few days after the test. The nurse looking after you during the test will advise you about what to do if this happens.
- The test takes two hours from the time the injection is given so please allow at least three hours to be in the unit.
- You will be resting in a reclining bed and you may eat and drink as normal after the test.
- You should be able to undertake normal activities after the test and it should not interfere with your ability to drive home.

What will happen after the test?

- You will be able to take your usual medications immediately after the test.
- The result of your test will be reviewed by the endocrinology doctor and this can take up to 4 weeks.
- 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 that the timing of your endocrine test is important so please report directly to the unit at 08.30am. If you are unable to keep your appointment, please contact the department and we will try to rearrange it for you.

Contact Details

Queen Elizabeth Hospital Birmingham
- Email (preferred method): **EndocrineSecretaries@uhb.nhs.uk**
- Phone: **0121-371-6950**
(we will aim to return telephone call within 3-5 working days)

Birmingham Heartlands, Solihull and Good Hope Hospitals
-Email (preferred method): **EndocrineNursesHGS@uhb.nhs.uk**
- Phone: **0121-424-2487**
(we will aim to return telephone call within 3-5 working days)

Accessibility



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