Pentagastrin Stimulation Test

Your doctor has asked us to coordinate a blood test to measure a very specialised hormone called calcitonin. This involves us giving you an injection of a medicine called pentagastrin through a cannula (a plastic tube inserted into your arm), and then taking a series of blood samples to see how your body responds to it. The purpose of this test is to help us find out if there is an overproduction of calcitonin hormone by your thyroid gland. Over production of calcitonin hormone may indicate the presence of a rare type of thyroid cancer.

Preparation for your test

- You should not have anything to eat and drink from 23:00 hours the night before the test (sips of water are allowed)
- You can take all your usual medications on the day of the test with minimal water
- Please bring all your usual medication with you, which we will document and which you can take at the end of the test if needed.
- The test will take at least one hour to be completed
- Please come to the Endocrine Day Case Unit at least five minutes before your specified appointment time
- Children are not advised to attend. However, if this poses a particular problem for you please discuss this with us

What will happen during your test?

- A doctor or nurse will explain the test to you
- You will need to lie down on a bed for the duration of your 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 medication (pentagastrin) through this cannula. This may cause you to feel nauseated (feeling sick) and experience some abdominal pains
- A series of blood samples will be taken over a period of approximately half an hour
- 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 your test?

- You will be able to take your medication as usual immediately after the test
- The result of your test will be reviewed by the endocrinology doctor and this could 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 the timing of your endocrine test is important so please report directly to the unit at least five minutes prior to your specified appointment time. 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)

Endocrine
University Hospitals Birmingham NHS Foundation Trust

Accessibility

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