Overnight Dexamethasone Suppression Test

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 Endocrine/Phlebotomy Department at 08.45am in time for your 9:00am blood test. Your Endocrine nurse will confirm the exact details of where you need to have your blood test done
- Please hand the blood form (enclosed in this letter or given to you when you attend the clinic) to the phlebotomist/Endocrine nurse
- The Endocrine/Phlebotomy Department is open from Tuesday-Saturday between the hours of 9am–4pm 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 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 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

If you have any queries please contact; For QE Hospital:
Email (preferred method): **EndocrineSecretaries@uhb.nhs.uk**
Phone: **0121 371 6950**
(we will aim to return telephone call within 3–5 working days)

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

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 Endocrine Nursing Team will return your call.

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

Accessibility

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