

Patient information

Overnight Dexamethasone Suppression Test

Diabetes and Endocrinology Speciality

Your doctor has advised you have an Overnight Dexamethasone Suppression Test. This is a screening test to determine whether your body is producing excessive cortisol causing a condition called Cushing's syndrome. If this test is positive it doesn't necessarily mean that you have Cushing's syndrome, but will need to be confirmed with definitive test.

Alternatively you can have urine cortisol test where you will have to collect your urine for 24 hours before we test for excessive cortisol.

Precaution:

- Steroid in any form must be stopped for a short period before the test.
- Any medication for epilepsy, please discuss this with your Endocrine doctor.
- Oestrogen containing medication (contraceptive pills and HRT) should be stopped at least six weeks before the test. Use alternate contraceptive methods during this period.
- Dexamethasone can raise your blood sugar and extra care should be taken in people with diabetes.
- May worsen symptoms of gastritis/acid reflux temporarily.
- Please avoid alcohol 24 hours before and during the test.

What will happen during the test?

- You will be given a hospital prescription for Dexamethasone 1mg tablet which needs to be collected from hospital pharmacy. You will also be given a blood form for cortisol.
- Please select a suitable day to take the tablet **avoiding Fridays and Saturdays**.
- The dexamethasone tablet needs to be taken at 11.00pm in the night before the blood test.
- Please come to Phlebotomy service at Royal Liverpool University Hospital to have the blood test done strictly at around 09:00 am the following day. **Do not forget to bring your enclosed blood form.**
- **The phlebotomy service is open Weekdays only.**
- This test does not need fasting.

- Appointment is not necessary for the blood test however please give your self sufficient time to be on time since strict timing is important for accurate results. Inaccurate results might lead to unnecessary investigations.

What will happen after the test?

- The results will be reviewed by endocrine doctors who will contact you directly if necessary.
- Further investigations and management will be discussed at your next outpatient appointment.

Feedback

Your feedback is important to us and helps us influence care in the future.

Following your discharge from hospital or attendance at your outpatient appointment you will receive a text asking if you would recommend our service to others. Please take the time to text back, you will not be charged for the text and can opt out at any point. Your co-operation is greatly appreciated.

Further Information

If you have any query or do need to speak to doctors please contact on call endocrine doctor via hospital switch board:

Tel: 0151 706 2000

Text phone number: 18001 0151 706 2000

If you have any worries or questions about the test or the date is inconvenient please contact the Medical Day Case Unit

Medical Day Case Unit

Telephone Number: 0151 706 2396

Text phone Number: 18001 0151 706 2396

Opening Hours:

07:30 – 20:00 Monday to Thursday

07:30 – 16:00 Friday

Author: Diabetes and Endocrinology Department

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All Trust approved information is available on request in alternative formats, including other languages, easy read, large print, audio, Braille, moon and electronically.

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