

MacLeod Diabetes &amp; Endocrinology Centre

## Investigation of lumps in the adrenal gland found on a scan

(Eastern services)

### Other formats

If you need this leaflet in another format such as Braille, large print, high contrast, British Sign Language or translated into another language, contact the Patient Advice and Liaison Service:

- 01392 402093 (for Mid Devon, East Devon and Exeter services)
- 01271 314090 (for North Devon services)
- [rduh.pals@nhs.net](mailto:rduh.pals@nhs.net)

You have recently had a scan that includes your adrenal glands. These are small glands that sit above your kidneys. They can sometimes become lumpy or enlarged and this has been found in your case. When they are lumpy they can occasionally produce hormones.

The lumps are common (about 4 in 100 people will have them) and are very unlikely to be cancerous. Most of the time they are of no consequence at all, but sometimes (about 5-10 in 100 people) they do produce excessive hormones (such as adrenaline or cortisol) and in the long-term that can increase the risk of high blood pressure or diabetes. For this reason, we test the function of the gland through blood and urine tests. The tests we request may depend on the appearance of the lump on your scan. Sometimes you will need an additional scan (dedicated adrenal CT) if the pictures from the original scan are not clear enough for the radiologist to assess the lump.

We would be grateful if you could contact us and let us know if you are taking medication for high blood pressure. This alters the tests we request but sometimes the tablets may interfere with the results.

The tests we may request are as follows:

### 1. Blood test after a tablet (overnight dexamethasone suppression test)

- We will give you a prescription for a dexamethasone 1mg tablet which you take at 11.00pm. **You must then have a blood test at 9.00am the following morning.**

- The blood test will be done either in your GP practice or at a local community hospital. You can eat and drink normally during this test.
- Dexamethasone is a small steroid tablet to look at whether your adrenals are producing steroid normally.
- If you have diabetes then you might notice that your blood sugars increase a little for around 48 hours after this tablet so it is important that you keep up a good intake of water and monitor your blood sugars more carefully at this time.
- Some tablets, such as those for epilepsy, can interfere with this test, so again, it is important that we know what medication you are taking.

## 2. A urine collection over 24 hrs (metanephrines)

- This test is looking for too much adrenaline in your body. You will be given an instruction leaflet which will tell you how to collect the urine samples, together with the forms and urine bottle (both with your name on). We would be grateful if you could pick up the '24hr urine bottles' from your local GP practice. We ask you to do this twice to minimise the chance of missing an important result. The tests are best done once a week for two consecutive weeks. These tests can only be performed Sunday to Thursday, so please do not start your collection on a Friday or Saturday morning. Please can you return the sample with the form to your GP surgery the morning that you finish each collection.

## 3. Blood test (renin and aldosterone measurement)

- We will only arrange for this test at the hospital if you have a high blood pressure or you are treated for hypertension.
- There are certain tablets, such as Spironolactone and Amiloride that interfere with this blood test so it is important that you bring a list of your tablets with you when you come to see our nurse specialist and for your doctor's appointment to help us interpret the results.

Once you have had these tests done, the results will be reviewed in a monthly meeting with the nurses, doctors and the radiographer. If everything looks reassuring we often don't need to see you or arrange any more follow up, and we will write to you and your GP to let you know. If any additional tests are necessary an appointment will be arranged with an endocrinology doctor to discuss the investigations so far, and discuss the next steps. Most commonly we don't need to do anything, occasionally we might discuss monitoring or tablet treatment and very occasionally we might discuss an operation.

If you would rather be seen by a doctor before these tests, or if you have questions before undertaking them then please contact the **endocrinology nurse** on **01392 402847**. It is worth noting that these are routine investigations, therefore there may be some delay in receiving an appointment.

## Your notes

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### PALS

The Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) ensures that the NHS listens to patients, relatives, carers and friends, answers questions and resolves concerns as quickly as possible. If you have a query or concern, please contact PALS:

- 01392 402093 (for Mid Devon, East Devon and Exeter services)
- 01271 314090 (for North Devon services)
- rduh.pals@nhs.net

### Have your say

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You can also share your feedback on the Care Opinion website at [www.careopinion.org.uk](http://www.careopinion.org.uk) or freephone 0800 122 3135.



Scan the QR code to visit the Care Opinion website →

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[www.royaldevon.nhs.uk](http://www.royaldevon.nhs.uk)

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