

Saline Suppression Test

What is the saline suppression test?

The saline suppression test is used to investigate whether you are producing too much of a hormone called Aldosterone (Conn's Syndrome). This is produced by the adrenal glands and in some people can be responsible for high blood pressure, and low potassium levels in their blood.

What does the test involve?

You will be at the hospital for around 5 and a half hours. You will have a clinic room to yourself, and we will ask you to be reclined on the patient couch throughout this test. For the first hour you will be resting, and we will insert a cannula in to one of your veins to take blood from. We will then use this to give you 2 litres of Normal Saline via a drip over a four hour period. We will monitor your blood pressure closely during this test. Once the drip has finished we will need to wait a few minutes before taking a further blood sample from the cannula. We are then able to remove this and you can go home.

What treatments are available?

If this test confirms Conn's Syndrome we will then be able to make some recommendations about the best medication to treat this (usually a tablet called Spironolactone). If you would be interested in a surgical option that could cure the condition we will request a scan of your adrenal glands to look for a lump as the cause of the excess Aldosterone.

What preparation do they need or not need?

You are able to eat or drink before the test. We may have to make some adjustments to your blood pressure medication which will be detailed in your appointment letter. Please bring your current medication with you. We will ask you to have a blood test for potassium a few days prior to the test.

What happens when they arrive at the hospital or the clinic and whom will they meet?

You will be met by one of the Endocrine Specialist Nurses and taken in to a clinic room where you will remain for the duration of the test.

Will they be asked to sign a consent form or is verbal consent needed?

The Endocrine Specialist Nurse will explain the procedure to you, and then you will be asked if you verbally consent to the test.

When can they start normal activities again?

There are no restrictions to your normal activities.

How long will they stay in hospital?

The test will take around 5 and a half hours

Going home – do they need someone with them or any special equipment?

You will not need any extra support at home and you can drive yourself to and from your appointment if needed.

What are the next steps?

The blood test results can take a few weeks to return, and the Endocrine Specialist Nurse will contact you by telephone when we have them.

Who can they contact if they have any more questions?

If you have any questions please feel free to contact the endocrine specialist nurses on **01392 402847** (answer phone available if endocrine nurse unavailable) or **rde-tr.exeterendocrinurses@nhs.net**

The Trust cannot accept any responsibility for the accuracy of the information given if the leaflet is not used by RD&E staff undertaking procedures at the RD&E hospitals.

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