

# 'High dose' dexamethasone suppression test for Cushing's disease

## Information for patients

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Your endocrinologist has asked us to arrange a 'high dose' dexamethasone suppression test. This is a test which can help to confirm if a high cortisol level is a result of a problem in your pituitary gland.

The test will involve visits to the metabolic unit for blood tests on three days. You will also be asked to attend to collect a container to collect urine in prior to the test.

### How should I prepare for the test?

Prior to the test you will be asked to collect urine over 24 hours. Please bring this with you on day one of the test.

If you are taking any steroid tablets, creams, inhalers or nasal spray please discuss whether to stop these with your endocrinologist.

### What happens during the test?

On the first day of the test blood samples will be taken in the morning and you will be given 2mg dexamethasone tablets to take every 6 hours for the next 48 hours. These are prescribed for 9am, 3pm, 9pm and 3am. Please try to take the tablets as prescribed and let the nursing team know if you have missed a dose.

You will be asked to complete a 24hour urine collection for each day of the test and will also need to attend for blood sampling at 9am each day.

### Are there any risks for me?

The test is safe, but dexamethasone tablets may make it harder for you to sleep and may make your blood sugar rise if you have diabetes. If you have diabetes, please discuss with your endocrinologist in case any changes are needed to your usual treatment.

Each visit will only last 20 minutes but it is important that you attend on each day and are able to complete the 24-hour urine collections. If it would be easier to arrange a different time, please discuss this with us.

### When will I get my results?

Your endocrinologist should be in touch with you with the results of the test. It can take 3-4 weeks to have all the test results back from the laboratory.

We enclose appointments for you. If you cannot make any of the appointments, please let us know so that we can reschedule.