

1mg overnight dexamethasone suppression test for the diagnosis of Cushing's syndrome

Information for patients

Your endocrinologist has asked that we arrange an overnight 1mg dexamethasone suppression test to help assess for Cushing's syndrome. We enclose a date and time. If you cannot make your appointment, please let us know so that we can rearrange this for a convenient time.

How should I prepare for the test?

If you are taking oestrogen containing HRT or contraceptive pill you should stop this 6 weeks before the test. It is essential to use other forms of contraception if this is needed.

You will need to attend hospital to pick up a prescription and collect 1mg dexamethasone tablet(s).

What happens during the test?

You should take the dexamethasone tablet at 11pm the night before your morning blood test is booked. If you usually take any steroid tablets/inhalers or creams please do not take these on the morning of the test. You can take these after the blood is drawn. Your appointment with us should last about 15 minutes.

Are there any risks to me?

The dose of dexamethasone prescribed is very low and we would not expect you to notice any effect. In some people it may make it slightly harder to fall asleep. If you have diabetes your glucose levels may be slightly higher on the morning of the test but it shouldn't be necessary to alter your treatment as this effect is short lived

When will I get my test results?

Your endocrinologist will be back in touch with you by letter or telephone with the results which may take 3 weeks to process.