

Hypertonic Saline Stress Test

Patient Information Sheet

Your doctor has recommended that you have a hypertonic saline stress test.

This is a letter with some pertinent information prior to your hypertonic sodium chloride stress test.

What is a hypertonic saline stress test?

Your doctor has referred you to have a hypertonic saline stress test. This test is performed over the period of a morning. You may be asked to stay for a longer period in order to have further monitoring. This test is done to determine a specific diagnosis in patients who are producing too much dilute urine and drinking a lot of water. This might be caused by not producing enough of the hormone called antidiuretic hormone (ADH) which is released from the pituitary gland.

What preparation is required?

Usual fluid intake is allowed on the day before the test, but please do try and keep this to a minimum overnight. You should remain fasted from the midnight of the day of the test. Please avoid smoking, and do not drink alcohol, tea, coffee, cola and energy drinks for 24 hours before the test. Caffeine, alcohol and smoking can all interfere with the interpretation of your results. Discontinue any diuretic or antidiuretic medications that you are taking for at least 24 hours before the test. If you are taking any pituitary hormone replacement therapy, this should continue at normal doses. You may also take any of your other usual medications on the morning before you come for the test.

What is involved on the day of the test?

You need to attend on time to your appointment. You will be asked to lie flat on the day and will have a cannula inserted into veins in both of your arms. After a short period, you will be given an infusion of saline through the cannula over a period of two hours. Throughout this time you will have regular blood samples taken. The saline infusion might end earlier if you achieve a certain level of sodium in your blood at any point of the test. You may experience symptoms of thirst, vertigo, mild headache, nausea and malaise during the test. Once this is finished, you will be given water to drink and your bloods will be checked again in an hour to ensure that the levels are back within the normal range. If this is not the case, you will be given another infusion to bring the levels back within the normal range before you are discharged.

You may wish to bring a book or magazine or listening device (including your own headphones). You may bring someone to stay with you during the test but there is not enough space for more than one person to accompany you. Children are discouraged from staying on the unit as this can be disruptive to other patients. However, if this poses a particular problem for you please discuss this with the senior nurse on the unit. You should be able to undertake your normal activities after the test is finished and it should not interfere with your ability to drive home, although you may prefer someone to bring you in and collect you.

If you have any queries about the test, please don't hesitate to contact the endocrine department on 01225 824101 or your consultants secretary.

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Please contact the Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) if you require this leaflet in a different format, or would like to feedback your experience of the hospital. Email ruh-tr.pals@nhs.net or telephone 01225 825656.