

narrowing of the carotid arteries in your neck with their stethoscope.

### **How long will the procedure last ?**

You will be asked to lie down for 5 minutes prior to the procedure. The procedure will then take about 1 minute and then you will stay lying flat in bed for 10 minutes.

### **What happens if I have any questions?**

If you have any questions or concerns you should ask the Doctor before signing the form to consent to carrying out the procedure. If you're not happy to have the procedure then it will not be carried out.

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## **Carotid Sinus Massage**

### **What is carotid sinus massage ?**

This is a procedure that is used to investigate unexplained dizziness, falls or faints. It involves gently massaging the carotid artery for 5 seconds on one side of your neck whilst monitoring your heart rhythm and blood pressure.

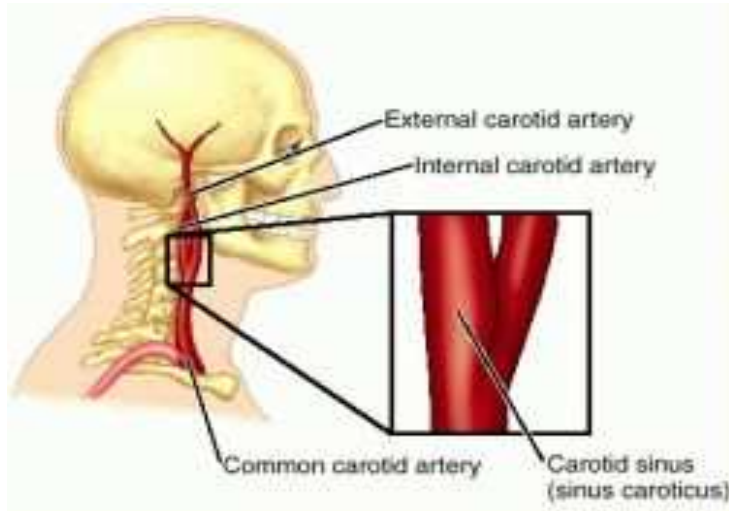
Your heart rhythm will be monitored via sticky pads on your chest attached to a heart monitor, whilst your blood pressure will be assessed via a cuff around your upper arm.

If the test is normal on one side of the neck, it will probably be repeated on the other side.

### **What is the carotid sinus ?**

This is a local swelling in the main arteries supplying the brain (internal carotid artery). Its function is to monitor and adjust the blood

pressure if it is too high or low. In some people the carotid sinus becomes over-sensitive which can cause the blood pressure to drop or the heart rate to slow when it is massaged. This can result in dizziness, falls or faints.



### **What are the risks ?**

There is a risk of some temporary loss of feeling, weakness, pins and needles in the limbs or disturbance in vision in about 1 in 1000 patients but this usually recovers within 24 hours. Very rarely these symptoms can be permanent.

### **What might happen during carotid sinus massage?**

Absolutely nothing may happen and this would be a negative test.

If the test is positive then your blood pressure may temporarily drop or your heart rate may slow which may cause you to go dizzy or faint.

If this reproduces your symptoms then we should be able to offer treatment for the future.

### **Who shouldn't have carotid sinus massage?**

If you have any of the following conditions you should not undergo carotid sinus massage:

- A heart attack or stroke in the last 3 months
- History of serious disturbances of the heart rhythm (eg. ventricular fibrillation or ventricular tachycardia)
- Adverse reaction to previous carotid sinus massage

You may need further investigation prior to carotid sinus massage if the Doctor hears any

