

## Patient information

# Hydrocortisone Day Curve

## Diabetes and Endocrinology Speciality

### What is a hydrocortisone day curve test and why do I need the test?

This test is performed to ensure you are taking the correct dose of hydrocortisone and the distribution of the steroid levels in your blood is somewhat similar to natural secretion of steroid hormone. We will be taking blood samples at regular intervals during the day to measure your blood cortisol levels allowing us to assess your cortisol replacement throughout the day.

### What are the risks/side effects?

- No side effects as such.

### Are there any alternatives to this test?

Not at our centre

### What will happen if I decide not to have this test?

Clinical decision to adjust the hydrocortisone will then have to be taken just based on your clinical symptom.

### What do I need to do before the test?

- Your health professional will advise if you need to stop any of your medication before the test. Ideally all the oestrogen products (combined contraceptive pills, HRT etc.) **should be stopped six weeks** before the test however, if this is not possible then please inform your endocrine doctor. **Please use other contraception methods during this time.**
- You **do not** need to fast before the test; you can eat and drink as normal.
- You should take your usual morning hydrocortisone dose; tell the staff what time the medication was taken when you get to the ward.
- Please aim to arrive on the ward at 8am or at least within two hours of the first dose, as the blood sample should be taken at two hours after the initial dose.

## **What happens during the test?**

- On the day of your test a nurse will check your details and explain the test to you. You will be on the ward for about eight hours.
- A nurse will put a small tube (cannula) into your vein, blood samples will be taken through this tube. This means you will not have to have lots of needles.
- You will be asked to take your hydrocortisone tablets at the usual dose and time you normally do at home.
- The time and the dose of the hydrocortisone will be recorded each time by one of the nursing staff.
- Blood samples will be taken for the cortisol (steroid) level two hourly for almost ten to twelve hours.
- The cannula will then be taken out and you will be able to go home straight away.

## **What will happen after the test?**

- Once you have completed the test, the results will be reviewed by endocrine doctors and they will contact you directly if action is needed before your next clinic appointment.
- Further investigation and management will be discussed in the endocrine clinic.

## **Feedback**

Your feedback is important to us and helps us influence care in the future.

Following your discharge from hospital or attendance at your outpatient appointment you will receive a text asking if you would recommend our service to others. Please take the time to text back, you will not be charged for the text and can opt out at any point. Your co-operation is greatly appreciated.

## **Further Information**

**If you have any worries or questions about the test or the date is inconvenient please contact the Medical Day Case Unit**

**Telephone number: 0151 706 2396**

**Text phone number: 18001 0151 706 2396**

**Opening Hours:**

**07:30 – 20:00 Monday to Thursday**

**07:30 – 16:00 Friday**

**Author: Diabetes and Endocrinology**

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