

Patient information factsheet

Glucose tolerance test

Why has your midwife or doctor recommended a glucose tolerance test (GTT)?

Your midwife may have recommended a GTT for a number of reasons, including:

- Previous large baby weighing 4.5 kg or more
- History of diabetes in your immediate family, i.e. your mother, father or siblings
- If you are overweight and have a body mass index (BMI) of 30 or above
- Previous gestational diabetes (a GTT recommended at 16 to 18 and 26 to 28 weeks)
- Confirmed polycystic ovary disease
- Ethnic origin (Black Caribbean, South Asian and Middle Eastern)
- Glucose 1+ on two or more occasions or 2+ on one occasion, if tested during your antenatal appointment.

What is the test for?

It is a screening test for diabetes in pregnancy (gestational diabetes). This is usually carried out between 26 and 28 weeks in your pregnancy. Sometimes this is also recommended earlier in your pregnancy.

What is gestational diabetes?

Gestational diabetes is a type of diabetes that starts during pregnancy. If you have gestational diabetes it will mean that your body is not able to make enough insulin (a hormone that controls your sugar levels) because of the changes caused by your pregnancy. This causes the levels of sugar in your blood to become higher than normal.

Gestational diabetes affects around 2 to 4% of pregnant women.

How is the GTT done?

The GTT test is commonly done at the day unit at Princess Anne Hospital or the day unit at Bitterne Health Centre. It may also be offered in the community depending on where you live.

Please make sure you have a good evening meal the night before your test, including rice, pasta, potato or bread. The test is usually done in the morning and you **must not eat anything from midnight before your test**. You may drink water freely. Smoking can also change the result. **Do not smoke** after midnight and until the test is completely finished. Do not take any indigestion remedies, vitamins or chewing gum. You can take essential medication such as thyroxine and blood pressure tablets as usual.

We will take a blood sample and then give you a sugary drink (Polycal) plus a further quantity of water. **Please drink both of these slowly over five minutes**. They are both measured amounts so you will need to drink it all. After two hours we will take another blood sample. Between blood tests you are free to go home or stay nearby. Both samples will be sent for analysis to see how your body deals with the sugar.

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Can I eat and drink during the test?

You can drink water, but you cannot eat anything until after the second blood sample has been taken. You may wish to bring something to eat for after the test.

When will I get the results of my GTT?

The diabetes team will contact you if the test shows you have gestational diabetes, usually within a week. They will invite you for a consultation at the hospital before the joint obstetric/diabetic clinic. If the test is normal, your midwife will be able to let you know the result during your next routine antenatal appointment.

Useful contacts

Day unit at Princess Anne Hospital	023 8120 6303
Day unit at Bitterne Health Centre	023 8042 6338
New Forest Birth Centre	023 8074 7690

If you need a translation of this document, an interpreter or a version in large print, Braille or on audio tape, please telephone 023 8120 4688 for help.