

## Patient information factsheet

# Four hour oral glucose tolerance test

Your doctor has recommended that you have a prolonged (four hour) oral glucose tolerance test. This factsheet aims to answer some of the initial questions you may have about what's involved. If you have further concerns or would like more information, please speak to your healthcare team.

### What is a prolonged oral glucose tolerance test?

It's a test which measures your blood sugar levels to see how they react in response to a set amount of sugar. This can indicate if you produce too much insulin in response to food, causing your blood sugar levels to go lower than usual.

Insulin is a hormone produced in the pancreas. It allows sugar from food or drink to enter the body's cells to provide energy.

The test will last for around four to five hours. You will be required to stay at the hospital during this time in order to give regular blood samples.

### Before your test

- You must not eat or drink anything apart from water from midnight before the test.
- It's a good idea to bring something to read or listen to as there will be periods of waiting between blood tests.
- The test will be carried out by an endocrine nurse specialist who will be able to answer any questions you may have.
- If you have diabetes, please contact the endocrine nurse before the test by telephone or email.

### During the test

A small thin needle called a cannula will be inserted into a vein in your arm or hand. This allows your nurse to take your blood samples directly.

- When the cannula is inserted, a blood sample will be taken to measure the starting blood glucose.
- You will then be given a sugary drink.
- Further blood samples will be taken every 30 minutes, for four to five hours.

### Side effects

You may experience symptoms of low blood sugar such as hunger, dizziness, shakiness, sweating or sleepiness. These symptoms will resolve when you are given food and drink.

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## After the test

When the test has finished, your cannula will be removed and we will give you something to eat and drink before you go home.

## Results

Results will either be sent to you by letter/a phone call or discussed with you at your next clinic appointment. We will also send a letter to your GP.

## Further information

Please contact the endocrine nurse specialist if you require more information or if there is anything you do not understand.

## Contact the endocrine nurse specialist

Telephone: **023 8120 4710**, Monday to Friday 8.30am to 4pm (answer phone service out of hours or if the nurse specialist is unavailable).

Email: [endocrinenurse@uhs.nhs.uk](mailto:endocrinenurse@uhs.nhs.uk)

## Useful links

NHS Choices

[www.nhs.uk/Conditions/Hypoglycaemia/Pages/Causes.aspx](http://www.nhs.uk/Conditions/Hypoglycaemia/Pages/Causes.aspx)

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