



PATIENT INFORMATION

Synacthen Test

What is it for?

A Short Synacthen test (SST) is performed to help the medical team find out if your body is producing enough of its own steroids. Steroids are hormones that help with things like blood pressure, fighting infections and releasing energy from food.

Is there any preparation?

There are some medicines that can affect the result of the test but you should have been advised if this affects you. Unless specifically asked to fast you can normally eat and drink as usual before and during the test.

What will happen?

The SST consists of a series of 3 blood tests and an injection that of a synthetic hormone that stimulates the adrenal glands just enough to allow us to measure the response. The dose given is very small, only 'active' for about 40 minutes and should not make you feel any different. You will have a small tube inserted into a vein for the injection and blood sampling. An initial blood test will be taken, the medication given and 2 further blood tests taken 30 minutes and an hour after the medication is given. The test takes just over an hour in total and once the final blood sample has been taken the tube in the vein will be removed and you can resume your normal daily activities

Are there any side effects or risks?

In common with other medicines there is potential for an allergic reaction causing swelling, skin irritation, flushing, wheezing and faintness. There is also potential for some bruising where the tube has been inserted into the vein. The nurses within the unit are trained to deal with allergic reactions in the unlikely event that it occurs.

Please inform the nursing staff if you have ever had an allergic reaction to any substance before or if you are prone to fainting or being unwell when having blood taken.

When will I know the result?

This will depend on the reason for the test. In some cases you may be telephoned on the same day, otherwise you will either receive a letter a week or so later or be given the results at your next outpatient appointment.

What if I can't come?

Please phone our Co-ordinator or TAIRU reception on 01803 655600. Your appointment can then be rearranged. **If you have any questions about the leaflet or would like some further information please contact: TAIRU Co-ordinator - Tel: 01803 655600**