

Patient information

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This information can be provided in a different language or format (e.g. large print, Braille or audio version) on request.

This is a smokefree Trust. Smoking is not allowed in any of our hospital buildings or grounds.

The Trust will not tolerate aggression, intimidation or violence.

Glucose tolerance test

Your doctor has asked you to have a glucose tolerance test. This information sheet tells you what the test is and how you need to prepare for it.

What is a glucose tolerance test?

Some people's bodies are unable to use glucose (sugar) properly. Usually this is obvious from a single blood test for glucose, but occasionally it has to be checked by a follow-up test. This can be done by drinking glucose and measuring how quickly it disappears from your blood.

What do I need to do to prepare for the test?

- 1 For three days before the test you should eat normally. This should include more than 150g carbohydrates each day. If your doctor or a dietician has prescribed a special diet, you should discuss this with them.
2. Only take your usual amount of exercise during the three days before the test.
- 3 You should eat nothing from 10pm the night before the test. You may only drink water.
- 4 If you regularly take medicines, take these as usual. If any should be taken with food, it may be advisable to delay taking them until after the test. If you are unsure about this, please contact your doctor.

How long will the test take and what does it involve?

You should plan on being at the hospital for approximately three hours from the time you arrive. At the start of the test, a sample of your blood will be collected from your arm. You will then be asked to drink a flavoured drink containing glucose and to stay in the department for two hours so that the final blood sample can be taken. If you are being tested during pregnancy an additional sample will be taken after one hour of taking the drink. During the two hour wait, you must not smoke or eat or have anything to drink, except a small amount of water. It is advisable to bring something to read to occupy your time. After the final sample is taken, you will be able to go home. The blood samples will then be sent to the laboratory for glucose levels to be measured.

When will I get the result?

The result will be sent to your GP, who will normally receive it the day after the test. The laboratory is not allowed to give the result to you.

What will it mean to me if the test is abnormal?

Most people have a normal result. If your test shows that your body does not clear glucose quickly enough, you may have Diabetes Mellitus.

Treatment could be a combination of diet and tablets. In rare cases, insulin injections may be required. Your doctor will decide which is the best treatment for you and will then

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regularly monitor your progress. Some people have partly abnormal results, which sometimes progresses to diabetes. Your doctor will discuss with you how this will be treated.

Where and when can I have the test?

Blood test appointments must be by pre-booked, online or by calling 01702 746 065.

Appointments can be booked for pregnant patients by the antenatal clinic or GP, at any of the three sites:

- Basildon Hospital
- Orsett Hospital
- St. Andrew's Hospital, Billericay

If you need any more information, please telephone the laboratory on 01268 524900 ext 3025/3029 or ask your GP.