

Information about your Synacthen test

Your doctor has referred you for a Synacthen test. This test checks whether your adrenal glands are making enough cortisol. Cortisol is an important hormone that helps keep you well. If your cortisol level is too low, you may become unwell.

At your appointment, we will take three blood samples. Synacthen is the medicine used to stimulate your adrenal glands. Synacthen is given through a small tube placed into a vein in your arm before the test starts.

Synacthen usually has very few side effects. Some people may feel warm or slightly sick, but this usually passes quickly.

If you have diabetes, this test may cause your blood glucose levels to rise for up to 24 hours. The nurse looking after you will advise you what to do if this happens.

You can take your other medicines as normal on the day of the test. However, please let us know at your appointment if you are taking hormone replacement therapy or if you have recently had a joint injection.

If you use steroids, including tablets, nasal drops, inhalers or skin creams, please do not use them on the morning of your test.

The test takes about 45 minutes to 1 hour. You will rest in a chair during the test. You can eat and drink as normal on the day of your appointment. You may wish to bring something to read, and you can bring someone with you if you would like.

After the test, you should be able to return to your normal activities. The test should not affect your ability to drive home.

If you have any questions about the test, please contact us using the telephone number above.

