



Welcome to the Endocrine Unit

☎ 0161 446 3479

Information sheet (5)

Arginine stimulation test

Your doctor has recommended that you have an Arginine stimulation test to check if your body is producing enough growth hormone.

Growth hormone is produced by the pituitary gland which is a tiny gland underneath the brain. Growth hormone is responsible for controlling growth and metabolism in childhood. Growth hormone is also produced in adulthood and is important for maintaining muscle and bone mass, and affects the levels of body fat.

Growth hormone also controls energy levels, memory and your general feeling of well-being.

Preparation for the test

- **You can take your regular medication.**
- **Please bring all of your medication with you.**
- **You need to fast from midnight the night before your test, you can drink water.**
- **You will be able to drive home.**

What will happen during the test?

- A doctor or nurse will explain your test to you and ask you to sign a consent form if you agree to have the test and understand the reasons for having it.
- You will need to lie down on a bed for the duration of your test.
- A nurse will place a cannula, which is a small tube used to take blood samples, into a vein in your arm. Blood samples will be taken to measure your growth hormone levels. The nurse will then give you an infusion of Arginine through the cannula into your vein. The infusion will take 30 minutes. This should stimulate growth hormone and cortisol production.
- The nurse will take blood samples to measure your growth hormone levels every half an hour for two and a half hours. Once the test is completed the nurse will remove the cannula and you will be given something to eat and drink.
- You will need to stay on the Endocrine Unit for one hour after the test for the nurses to monitor you. You will then be able to go home.

Are there any risks with this test?

Some people experience tingling in their lips and have a metallic taste.

Is there an alternative test?

It is often necessary to have two different growth hormone stimulation tests. When your results have been reviewed by the endocrine team you might be asked to come for a second test. This test is one of three tests that we use to assess patients for possible growth hormone deficiency. The alternative tests are a Glucagon Stimulation test or an Insulin tolerance test.

Your results will be reviewed by the Endocrinology doctors. We will inform you and your GP of your results and any changes to treatment or medication by letter. Sometimes it is also necessary for us to contact you by telephone so please provide us with your home and mobile telephone numbers when you come in for your test.

If you have any questions about your test or results please contact the Endocrine Unit on 0161 446 3479.

The timing of endocrine tests is important so please attend at the time specified on your appointment letter. If you are unable to keep your appointment please contact the department and we will rearrange it for you.