

## Patient Information

# Overnight Dexamethasone Suppression Test

### ***Purpose***

This test is used to investigate whether you might have Cushing's syndrome, where the adrenal glands make too much cortisol, a steroid hormone.

If you give a normal person too much steroid hormone they switch off their own production very quickly. In Cushing's syndrome they do not switch off this production, this is the basis of the test.

### ***Preparation***

If you are taking oral oestrogen or implants they will need to be stopped six weeks before the test as they can affect the results; this includes HRT and some oral contraceptive pills, (if so you may need to consider alternative contraception). If you are taking any steroid tablets, drops, creams, lotions or inhalers your doctor must know about them to decide if they can be stopped. Certain medicines can affect the test so please make sure your doctor knows everything you are taking, whether prescribed or not.

### ***Procedure***

You will be provided with two (2) tablets of dexamethasone 0.5mg to take together. Dexamethasone is a synthetic steroid; 1 mg is a small dose, a little over the normal steroid produced by the body per day.

Very rarely can this dose make one agitated, sleep poorly, thirsty or pass water; please persevere, the symptoms get better and there are no more tablets to take.

### ***Arrangements for the Test***

Arrange when you can have the blood tests for the test.

Please take the two tablets at 10pm and plan to have a blood test the next morning between 8 – 10am.

You will have forms for your blood tests given from your doctor or they will be on the ward for you.

**2200**            1mg dexamethasone

**08 – 1000**    Blood test and the test is over.

### ***Results***

Your doctor will see you with the results and explain them.

Any problems please contact Dr Philip Kelly on 020 3299 6085