

PATIENT INFORMATION SHEET – WATER DEPRIVATION TEST

Your doctor has recommended that you take this test to help with the diagnosis and the management of your condition. Please read the information below carefully and ask us about anything that is not clear or if you would like more information.

WHAT IS A WATER DEPRIVATION TEST?

This test will help determine why you are feeling thirsty and / or passing a lot of urine. It will point to whether you have a condition called 'diabetes insipidus'. This is a disorder in which your kidneys are unable to retain water, so you produce large volumes of urine which makes you feel very thirsty. This may be caused by a problem either with the pituitary gland (a small gland beneath the brain) or the kidneys.

WHAT DO I NEED TO DO TO PREPARE FOR THE TEST?

Your Doctor (Endocrinologist) will usually have advised you about preparations for the test in advance. This should include advice about whether or not you should take your regular tablets and medicines on the morning of the test. You are encouraged to drink fluids overnight, and a light breakfast is allowed on the morning of the test without tea or coffee, but you must not smoke before or during the test. During the test no fluids are allowed although some dry food is permitted.

IS ANY DRUG OR MEDICINE USED DURING THIS TEST?

Depending on the results of your blood and urine tests during the day, you may be given an injection of DDAVP (desmopressin). This is a natural hormone (chemical signal) produced by the pituitary gland which makes the kidneys produce more concentrated urine.

HOW LONG WILL THE TEST TAKE AND WHAT DOES IT INVOLVE?

The test can last about eight hours (usually 08.30 – 16.30hrs). The length of time will depend on the results of the investigations done on your blood and urine during the test. If we discover early on that you do not have diabetes insipidus, then the test will not take too long. When you arrive we will weigh you and ask you to give a urine sample. A small plastic tube will be placed using a needle, into a vein in your arm. This will be used to take regular blood samples without the need for more needles. Every few hours, when you pass urine, we will check your weight again and take another blood sample. We will measure the amount of urine that you pass. It is very important that you do not drink anything during the test, even if you feel very thirsty, as this makes it very hard for us to interpret the results.

WHAT ARE THE POSSIBLE RISKS OR SIDE EFFECTS OF THIS TEST?

You may feel very thirsty. The nurse or doctor will monitor your weight, blood and urine results carefully throughout the test to ensure that you do not become unwell.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN AFTER THE TEST?

The results of the blood and urine samples are analysed and the report sent to your Doctor (Endocrinologist) who will discuss the results with you at your next appointment. If the results show that you have diabetes insipidus, they will discuss treatment and further investigations with you.