

Clonidine Stimulation Test (1 of 1)

Clonidine is a medicine that causes the pituitary gland to secrete growth hormone. After taking the medicine, blood samples will be collected to measure how well your pituitary gland is working.

Preparation	The night before the test, do not eat or chew gum. Do not drink anything except water after midnight on the day of the test. You will be told if you are to stop taking any medications before the test.
Procedure	Before the test, a heparin lock will be inserted into a vein in your arm or hand, this allows blood samples to be taken without repeatedly inserting needles. A local anaesthetic cream or cold spray will normally be offered when this is inserted to reduce the pain when the heparin lock is inserted. At the beginning of the test, you will be asked to swallow a tablet containing clonidine. Clonidine will be absorbed from your stomach and travel through the bloodstream to the brain. Once in the brain, it will cause the pituitary gland to secrete growth hormone. At intervals during the test, blood samples will be taken to measure growth hormone. The test takes a minimum of 2 hours.
Side-Effects	The main side effects seen during the test are mild sedation and a mild reduction in blood pressure. The following side-effects have been reported when clonidine is taken regularly to treat high blood pressure - dry mouth, sedation, depression, fluid retention, slow pulse rate, constriction of the blood vessels in the fingers and toes, headache, dizziness, euphoria, nocturnal unrest, rash, nausea, constipation and rarely impotence.
After the procedure	After the last blood sample, and if no other blood tests are needed, the heparin lock will be removed. You may have a snack. You should stay in bed until you are no longer drowsy and your blood pressure has returned to normal. The nurse will monitor your blood pressure and let you know when it is normal. This may take 1-2 hours. You may then resume your usual activities and go home.

If you need this information in another language or medium (audio, large print, etc) please contact the Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) on 0800 374 208 email: palservice@salisbury.nhs.uk
You are entitled to a copy of any letter we write about you. Please ask if you want one when you come to the hospital

We ask for information about you so that you can receive proper care and treatment. This information remains confidential and is stored securely by the Trust in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998.

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