

Harmonisation of Endocrine Dynamic Testing (HEDT)

This manual is a joint initiative from ESA/AACB/RCPA and is freely available as a resource for Endocrinologists and Biochemists. Information provided is a guide only and needs to be verified and modified according to local procedures (e.g. patient consent, sample type, name of test set). Queries can be directed to the chair of the HEDT working party. A separate paediatric endocrine dynamic testing protocol is in progress with the HDET-P working party.

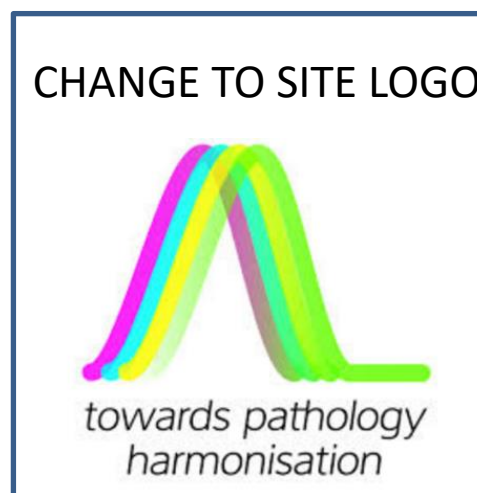


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Endocrine Analyte Reporting Unit and Sample Tube

The following table is provided as a guide, check with local laboratory for sample type.

Test	Standard unit	Alternate unit	Conversion to alternate unit	Collection tube	Collection comment
ACTH	pmol/L	pg/mL ng/L	4.54	EDTA	Collect on ice
Aldosterone	pmol/L	ng/dL	0.036	EDTA	State erect (seated for 10 mins) or supine (for 30 mins) on request slip
Aldosterone-Urine	pmol/L	ng/dL	0.036	plain container	Urine 24 h Keep the container refrigerated during the collection period
AVP / ADH	pmol/L	pg/mL	0.923	2 x 4 ml EDTA	Collect on ice
Androstenedione	nmol/L	ng/dL	28.65	Li heparin	
βHCG	IU/L	mIU/mL	1	Li heparin	
C-peptide	nmol/L	ng/mL	0.331	Li heparin	Fasting
Calcitonin	pmol/L	pg/mL	0.292	Li heparin or serum tube NOT EDTA.	Fasting specimen is preferred. Collect on ice.
Chromogranin A	ug/L			Serum	Fasting specimen preferred. Collect on ice.
Copeptin	pmol/L			Li heparin	
Cortisol	nmol/L	μg/dL	27.588	Li heparin/ serum	Morning 8 – 9 am sample
Cortisol - Saliva	nmol/L	μg/dL	27.588	Salivette	11 pm to midnight collection. Nil by mouth/ no teeth brushing 30 mins prior.
DHEAS	μmol/L	μg/dL	0.027	Serum	
Estradiol	pmol/L	pg/mL	0.272	Serum	
Free T3	pmol/L	pg/dL	64.9	Li heparin/ serum	
Free T4	pmol/L	ng/dL	0.0775	Li heparin/ serum	

FSH	IU/L	mIU/mL	1	Li heparin	
Gastrin	pmol/L	pg/mL	0.481	Serum	Fasting, collect on ice. Proton pump inhibitors elevate result.
Glucagon	ng/L	pg/mL	1	EDTA & trasylol containing GLASS tube (Use 6 mg Na EDTA + 2,500 KIU trasylol per 5 ml blood)	Fasting. Collect on ice
Glucose	mmol/L	mg/dL	18	Fluoride oxalate	Li heparin/ serum if rapid transport to laboratory
GH	µg/L	mU/L	3	Li heparin or Serum tube	
Insulin	pmol/L	mU/L	0.144	Serum	Fasting. Collect on ice
Insulin Ab	unit			Serum	
IGF-1	nmol/L	ng/mL	0.131	Serum or Li heparin	
IGF BP3	nmol/L			Serum	Collect on ice
LH	IU/L			Li heparin/ serum	
17-OHP	nmol/L			Serum	
Metanephrines (plasma)				Li heparin	Fasting, collect on ice, supine for 30 mins. 3-methoxytyramine might need to be specified on request if required
Osteocalcin	µg/L			Serum, Li-heparin or K3 EDTA	
Pancreatic polypeptide	pmol/L			Serum	Fasting, morning sample
PTH	pmol/L	pg/mL ng/L	9.4	Serum or EDTA	Serum tubes to send immediately
PTH-rp	pmol/L			EDTA with Aprotinin additive	Collect on ice
Progesterone	nmol/L	ng/dL	31.44	Li heparin/ serum	
Prolactin	mIU/L	µg/L	43.478	Li heparin/	EDTA plasma possible for

				serum	most assays for IPSS
Renin mass	mIU/L			EDTA	Do NOT collect on ice. State erect or supine on request slip as per aldosterone
SHBG	nmol/L	µg/mL	8.896	serum or Li heparin	
Steroid profile-Urine				plain container	24-hr urine
Sulphonylurea Screen				serum	Collect during hypoglycemia, only detect ingestion within 24 hrs
VIP	pmol/L	pg/mL	3.38	EDTA & trasylol containing GLASS tube (<i>Use 6 mg Na EDTA + 2,500 KIU trasylol per 5 ml blood</i>)	Fasting, collect on ice
Testosterone	nmol/L	ng/dL	28.8	Li heparin/serum	Fasting, morning 8-9 am sample
TSH	mIU/L			Li heparin/serum	

1 Adrenal

1.1 SHORT SYNACTHEN TEST

RATIONALE:

The cortisol response to Synacthen stimulation will be low or absent due to primary adrenal pathology (e.g. Addison's disease, bilateral adrenal infiltration) or adrenal atrophy secondary to severe ACTH deficiency of at least 4 weeks' duration. (1) This test does not assess adequacy of ACTH/ CRH response to stress if pathology was of short duration. This is assessed by the ITT or overnight metyrapone test.

Also used for diagnosis of non-classical 21-hydroxylase deficiency, if a morning, screening follicular phase 17 OH progesterone is > 6 nmol/L. For other causes of congenital adrenal hyperplasia, contact laboratory for required tests.

PREPARATION AND PROCEDURE:

1) Withhold any steroid treatment for 24 hours prior to the test (patients treated with dexamethasone require at least 48 hours of steroid withdrawal) if appropriate.

2) Baseline blood is collected for cortisol and ACTH. Procedure should be performed between 8 - 9:30am when cortisol peak is present.

3) IM or IV Synacthen 250 µg

4) Blood for cortisol collected at 30 and 60 minutes

Time	Procedure/ Test	Comment
Baseline	ACTH, cortisol	Also 17-OH progesterone if CAH queried
0 minute	IV or IM Synacthen 250 µg	
30 minutes	cortisol	Also 17-OH progesterone if CAH queried
60 minutes	cortisol	Also 17-OH progesterone if CAH queried

INTERPRETATION:

- Normal SST requires a cortisol from at least one time point to exceed the minimum peak cortisol cut-off specified for that assay. The concentration of peak cortisol cut-off is assay dependent, and for female, OCP raises total cortisol level due to rise in CBG. (1)
- The use of historical peak cortisol of 550 nmol/L in newer cortisol-specific assays may result in false positive results. (2) Previous requirement for a minimum cortisol increment from baseline (e.g. 250 nmol/L) is also redundant as normal individuals with high baseline cortisol will not achieve this increment.

Laboratories need to determine their own individual cut-off. The table below describes the minimum cortisol level achieved post synacthen at 30 minutes for different immunoassays. (3) The 60 minutes cortisol level was reported to be around 15% higher than the 30 minutes level. (4)

Minimum peak cortisol cut-off (2.5th centile) for healthy subjects 30 mins post IV Synacthen (2):

Assay	Male	Female	Female (OCP)
GC-MS	420	420	640
Siemen Centaur	450	450	620
Abbott Architect	430	420	580
Roche E170	* 400	* 400	* 600
Beckman Access	460	460	600
Siemen Immulite	470	480	690

* Roche Cort II assay was not available at time of published study, but correlation study indicated results similar to MS methods, the above cut-offs were used by most New Zealand laboratories.

Test outcome	Suggested comment:
Normal SST	The short Synacthen test was normal, stimulated cortisol level exceeded (the minimum peak cortisol cut-off specified for that assay). This does not exclude acute secondary hypocortisolism.
Abnormal SST	The short Synacthen test was abnormal, stimulated cortisol levels were below (the minimum peak cortisol cut-off specified for that assay).

INTERPRETATION for 21 HYDROXYLASE DEFICIENCY CAH: (5)

Test outcome	Suggested comment:
Stimulated 17 OH progesterone > 43 nmol/L	An exaggerated rise of 17 OH progesterone post ACTH stimulation (>43 nmol/L) is seen in 21 hydroxylase deficiency CAH, and some patients with adrenal adenomas.
Stimulated 17 OH progesterone 30 - 43 nmol/L	A moderate rise of 17 OH progesterone post ACTH stimulation (30-43 nmol/L) constitutes a grey zone whereby genetic tests might be required to confirm or exclude 21 hydroxylase deficiency CAH.
Stimulated 17 OH progesterone < 30 nmol/L	A mild rise of 17 OH progesterone post ACTH stimulation (< 30 nmol/L) is a normal physiological response and not consistent with 21 hydroxylase deficiency CAH.

The cut-offs for 17 OH progesterone are based on radioimmunoassay, consult laboratory if LCMS method is used.

NOTES:

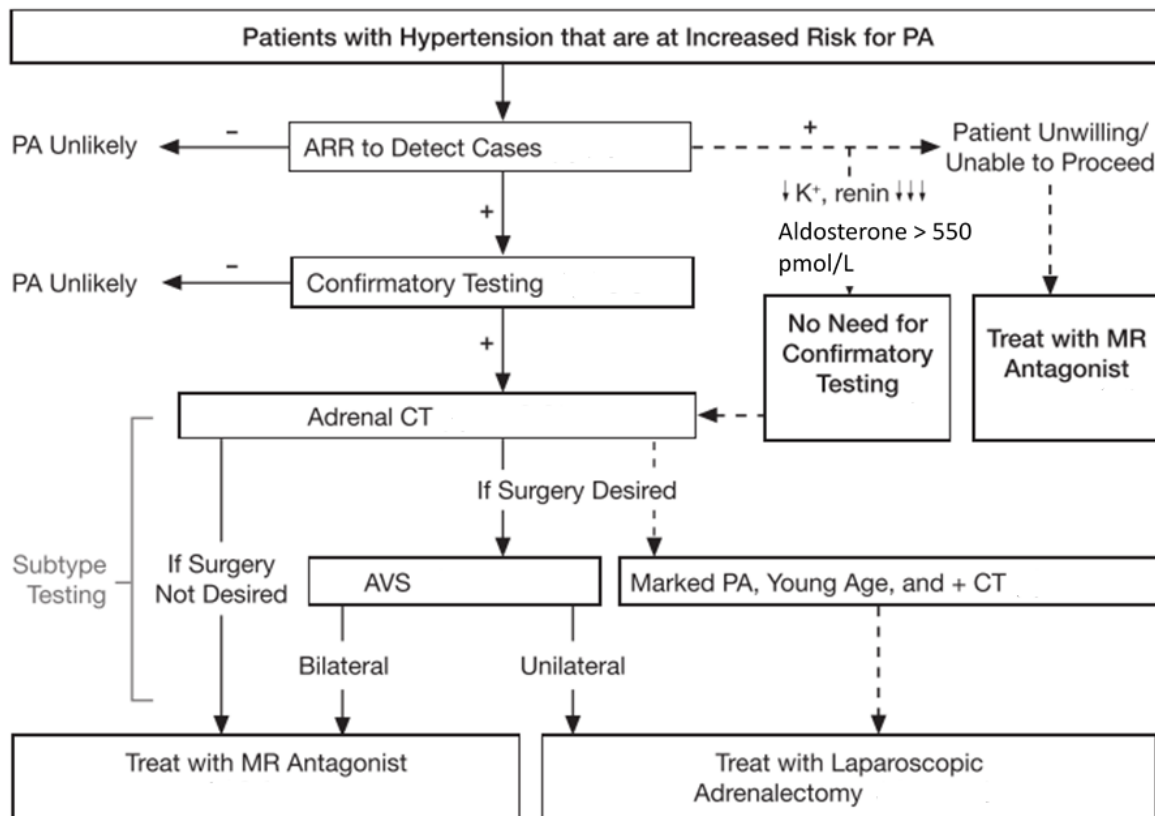
- Nausea, palpitation, hot flushes or allergic reaction can rarely occur with synacthen.
- Although IV administration is preferred, IM administration is also valid, however cortisol at 30 minutes is more variable. (6)
- SST result is difficult to interpret in critically ill patients due to difficulties in interpreting total cortisol results from immunoassays. (7)

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1.2 PRIMARY ALDOSTERONISM INVESTIGATION

PATIENT PREPARATION



Algorithm for the detection, confirmation, subtype testing, and treatment of Primary hyperaldosteronism (PA). Adapted from Management of Primary Aldosteronism: Case Detection, Diagnosis, and Treatment: An Endocrine Society Clinical Practice Guideline. (1)

- Interfering drugs which can affect renin, aldosterone or both should be stopped for at least
 - 4 weeks: Spironolactone, eplerenone, amiloride, and triamterene, potassium-wasting diuretics, licorice.
 - 2 weeks: Angiotensin-converting enzyme inhibitors, angiotensin receptor blockers, renin inhibitors, and dihydropyridine calcium channel antagonists, clonidine, methylopa, beta-blockers.
- Drugs which do not affect renin, aldosterone for blood pressure control includes: verapamil slow-release, prazosin, hydralazine, moxonidine.
- Hypokalemia needs to be corrected.
- Aldosterone:renin ratio (ARR) is the preferred screening test. Preferably two elevated values should be obtained prior to confirmation testing. The ARR test is most sensitive when samples are collected in the morning after patients have been out of bed for at least 2 hours, usually after they have been seated for 5–15 minutes.

- There is no gold standard for confirmation testing. Of the 4 testing procedures available, captopril challenge test can have false negative equivocal results and therefore not mentioned in this document. (1) Oral sodium loading test requires sensitive and specific urinary aldosterone measurement (LC-MSMS) in patients without renal impairment.
- In florid Primary aldosteronism (hypokalemia, suppressed renin, elevated aldosterone > 550 pmol/L), confirmation tests might not be required.

1.3 SALINE SUPPRESSION TEST

RATIONALE:

Confirmation test when aldosterone:renin ratio (ARR) elevated. Test should not be performed in patients with uncontrolled hypertension, hypokalaemia, arrhythmias, severe CCF or renal failure. Saline infusion acts as a salt and fluid load, suppresses aldosterone production in normal subjects but not in subjects with primary aldosteronism.

PROCEDURE:

1) Seated procedure

Time	Procedure	Comment
-30 minutes	Patient seated for 30mins prior to and during infusion	
Baseline	Renin, aldosterone, U+Es, cortisol	Patient remains seated throughout procedure
0 minute	2L 0.9% Normal Saline IV over 4hours	
4 hours	Renin, aldosterone, U+Es, cortisol	

2) Recumbent procedure

Time	Procedure	Comment
-60 minutes	Patient recumbent for 60mins prior to and during infusion	
Baseline	Renin, aldosterone, U+Es, cortisol	Patient remains recumbent throughout procedure
0 minute	2L 0.9% Normal Saline IV over 4hours	
4 hours	Renin, aldosterone, U+Es, cortisol	

INTERPRETATION:

Primary aldosteronism is confirmed if all of the conditions below are met:

- 1) K⁺ level normal (at least 4.0 mmol/L)
- 2) Post infusion cortisol is less than basal cortisol to exclude confounding ACTH effect
- 3) Post infusion aldosterone cut off:
 - A) Seated procedure >170 pmol/L
 - B) Recumbent procedure >140 pmol/L(140 – 280 pmol/L = borderline, >280 pmol/L = PA very likely)

NOTES:

- Fluid status check should take place during infusion, particularly for those prone to fluid overload.
- Seated normal saline suppression test was found to have higher sensitivity compared to supine normal saline suppression and has good agreement with the more cumbersome fludrocortisone suppression test. (2)
- The above aldosterone cut offs are for immunoassays, values are lower if measured using LCMS, please consult laboratory for local cut-off.

1.4 FLUDROCORTISONE SUPPRESSION TEST

RATIONALE:

Confirmation test when aldosterone:renin ratio (ARR) elevated. Test should not be performed in patients with uncontrolled hypertension, hypokalaemia, arrhythmias, severe CCF or renal failure. Fludrocortisone, a potent mineralocorticoid, suppresses aldosterone production in normal subjects but not in subjects with primary aldosteronism.

PROCEDURE:

- 1) Most patients require admission to monitor BP and K⁺ status
- 2) Ensure normokalaemia throughout the procedure with oral Slow K QID (target K⁺ = 4 mmol/L)
- 3) Salt loading is required, e.g. a liberalized dietary sodium intake, supplemented by Slow-Na 10 mmol three tablets TDS, target urine Na excretion > 3 mmol/kg/day
- 4) Collect 24 hr urine for aldosterone, sodium, potassium and creatinine levels 1 day prior to fludrocortisone administration and again on the last 24h
- 5) Give Fludrocortisone 0.1 mg every 6 hours for 4 days (0400,1000,1600,2200)
- 6) Daily blood test for renin, aldosterone, U+Es, cortisol. Extra blood test might be required for Slow K dosing
- 7) Blood test at 0700 and 1000 on Day 5 are required for interpretation

Time	Procedure	Comment
- 1 Day	24 hr urine aldosterone, sodium, potassium and creatinine	Ensure normokalaemia (target K ⁺ = 4 mmol/L) and salt loading for the 4 days of test. Check K ⁺ to adjust slow K dose
Day 1: 0700	Recumbent: Renin, aldosterone, U+Es, cortisol	
Day 1: 1000	Upright: Renin, aldosterone, U+Es, cortisol	Fludrocortisone 0.1 mg every 6 hours (1000,1600,2200)
Day 1: 1600	Check K ⁺	Optional to ensure K remains at target
Day 2: 0700	Recumbent: Renin, aldosterone, U+Es, cortisol	Fludrocortisone 0.1 mg every 6 hours (0400,1000,1600,2200)
Day 2: 1000	Upright: Renin, aldosterone, U+Es, cortisol	
Day 2: 1600	Check K ⁺	Optional to ensure K remains at target
Day 3: 0700	Recumbent: Renin, aldosterone, U+Es, cortisol	Fludrocortisone 0.1 mg every 6 hours (0400,1000,1600,2200)
Day 3: 1000	Upright: Renin, aldosterone, U+Es, cortisol	
Day 3: 1600	Check K ⁺	Optional to ensure K remains at target
Day 4: 0700	Recumbent: Renin, aldosterone, U+Es, cortisol	Fludrocortisone 0.1 mg every 6 hours (0400,1000,1600,2200)
Day 4: 1000	Upright: Renin, aldosterone, U+Es, cortisol 24 hr urine aldosterone, sodium, potassium and creatinine	
Day 4: 1600	Check K ⁺	Optional to ensure K remains at target
Day 5: 0700	Recumbent: Renin, aldosterone,	Last dose of fludrocortisone Day 5 at

	U+Es, cortisol	0400.
Day 5: 1000	Upright: Renin, aldosterone, U+Es, cortisol	

INTERPRETATION:

Primary aldosteronism is confirmed if all of the conditions below are met:

- 1) upright aldosterone levels on Day 5 (4 days of fludrocortisone) is > 170 pmol/L (1)
- 2) upright renin on Day 5 is suppressed.
- 3) K+ level normal (at least 4.0 mmol/L) on Day 5
- 4) Plasma cortisol on Day 5 does not increase significantly from 0700h to 1000h (increase may indicate ACTH stimulation of aldosterone production that may have prevented suppression).

NOTES:

- Blood pressure and fluid status check should take place during fludrocortisone and salt loading.
- Aldosterone cut off is lower (down to 130 pmol/L) if measured using LCMS rather than immunoassay, consult laboratory for cut-off.

1.5 ORAL SODIUM LOADING TEST

RATIONALE:

Confirmation test when aldosterone:renin ratio (ARR) elevated. Test should not be performed in patients with uncontrolled hypertension, hypokalaemia, arrhythmias, severe CCF or renal insufficiency. Oral sodium suppresses aldosterone production in normal subjects but not in subjects with primary aldosteronism.

PROCEDURE:

- 1) Ensure adequate potassium to maintain normokalaemia
- 2) Oral sodium 200 mmol or 6 g daily
- 3) 24 hr urine collection for aldosterone and Na starting on Day 3
- 4) Urine aldosterone needs analysis on a specific assay

Time	Procedure	Comment
Day 1	Oral sodium 200 mmol or 6 g daily	
Day 2	Oral sodium 200 mmol or 6 g daily	
Day 3	Oral sodium 200 mmol or 6 g daily	Start 24 hr urine (aldosterone and Na) collection 8am after discarding first void urine
Day 4		Complete 24 hr urine (aldosterone and Na) collection 8am

INTERPRETATION:

Elevated 24 hr urine aldosterone > 33 nmol/day by LCMS method makes primary hyperaldosteronism likely, providing 24 hr urine Na is elevated (urine Na excretion >3 mmol/kg/day). Consult laboratory for local cut-off.

NOTES:

Non-specific aldosterone methods may blunt diagnostic accuracy due to cross-reactivity with other metabolites in urine.

1.6 ADRENAL VENOUS SAMPLING

RATIONALE:

In patients with confirmed primary aldosteronism (PA) who are surgical candidates, adrenal venous sampling (AVS) is the gold standard in lateralisation of the source of aldosterone excess and differentiates between unilateral adrenal adenoma from bilateral adrenal hyperplasia. All patients should have adrenal CT prior to AVS to exclude large adrenal masses.

CT and MRI can misdiagnose the cause of PA. Therefore, AVS is still required for lateralisation with the exception of younger patients < 35 years with spontaneous hypokalaemia, marked aldosterone excess, and unilateral adrenal cortical adenoma on CT who might be able to proceed directly to unilateral adrenalectomy. (1)

AVS should be performed by experienced interventional radiologist. The use of ACTH stimulation is used to improve successful cannulation rate and minimise stress induced fluctuation in sequential adrenal vein sampling. Point of care cortisol kit during AVS also increased cannulation rates. (4)

PROCEDURE:

- 1) Book AVS with experienced interventional radiologist. Notify laboratory of test.
- 2) AVS can be
 - a) Unstimulated: only baseline AVS samples collected in early morning after overnight recumbency.
 - b) Stimulated with Synacthen: baseline and post ACTH AVS samples collected. Synacthen protocols include:
 - I. Bolus 250 µg Synacthen 15 mins before stimulated AVS collection
 - II. Continuous 50 µg/hr Synacthen (250µg in 500ml N saline, 100ml per hr) 30 mins before stimulated AVS collection and continued until AVS completion
 - III. Bolus 250 µg Synacthen followed by 50µg/hr Synacthen 15- 30 mins before stimulated AVS collection and continued until AVS completion
- 3) Tubes should be pre-labelled with site, baseline/ stimulated samples and collected in duplicate at each site for each timepoint.

Baseline AVS collection

Time	Procedure	Comment
Document time on tube	Common femoral vein is punctured and a 5 French sheath inserted. <i>Peripheral</i> cubital fossa blood taken for aldosterone and cortisol	
Document time on tube	Selective catheterization of <i>left adrenal vein</i> and take blood for aldosterone and cortisol	
Document time on	Selective catheterization of <i>right</i>	Right adrenal vein is more

tube	<i>adrenal vein</i> and take blood for aldosterone and cortisol	difficult to cannulate.
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Stimulated AVS collection (post Synacthen stimulation)

Time	Procedure	Comment
	Synacthen stimulation	See procedure above
Document time on tube	<i>Peripheral</i> cubital fossa blood taken for aldosterone and cortisol	Procedure starts 15 to 30 mins post Synacthen administration depending on protocol used
Document time on tube	Selective catheterization of <i>right adrenal vein</i> and take blood for aldosterone and cortisol	Right adrenal vein is more difficult to cannulate
Document time on tube	Selective catheterization of <i>left adrenal vein</i> and take blood for aldosterone and cortisol	

INTERPRETATION:

Lateralisation of aldosterone excess is present if all of the following are present:

- 1) Both adrenal veins were successfully cannulated (adrenal vein cortisol: peripheral cortisol ≥ 2 at baseline, ≥ 3 post ACTH).
- 2) Aldosterone:cortisol ratio (ACR) between the two adrenals is > 4 (if gradient < 2 : no evidence of lateralisation, if gradient 2-4: borderline)
- 3) The unaffected adrenal gland should have an ACR $<$ periphery ACR to indicate suppression by the contralateral unaffected side.

Lack of lateralisation can occur in a) bilateral aldosterone producing adenoma, b) bilateral adrenal hyperplasia, c) Glucocorticoid Remediable Aldosteronism.

NOTES:

- Sample worksheet on next page
- Adrenal haemorrhage can occur in up to 2.5% of AVS procedures
- In patients < 20 years old with confirmed PA or in those who have a family history of PA or strokes < 40 years old, genetic testing for FH-I (Glucocorticoid Remediable Aldosteronism, hybrid CYP11B1/CYP11B2 mutation) should be considered. (1)
- In patients with confirmed PA presenting in childhood, germline mutations in KCNJ5 causing FH-III should be considered.
- Glucocorticoid Remediable Aldosteronism mutation testing replaces indirect test such as dexamethasone suppression test.

AVS Worksheet Template

	Pre-Synacthen		Post-Synacthen		
Right AV	Time:	<input type="text"/>	Time:	<input type="text"/>	
Aldosterone	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	pmol/L
Cortisol	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	nmol/L
Aldo:Cort Ratio ^	#DIV/0!	#####	#VALUE!	#VALUE!	
Left AV	Time:	<input type="text"/>	Time:	<input type="text"/>	
Aldosterone	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	pmol/L
Cortisol	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	nmol/L
Aldo:Cort Ratio ^	#VALUE!	#####	#VALUE!	#VALUE!	
Periphery	Time:	<input type="text"/>	Time:	<input type="text"/>	
Aldosterone	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	pmol/L
Cortisol	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	nmol/L
Aldo:Cort Ratio ^	#VALUE!	#####	#VALUE!	#VALUE!	
R A:C to L A:C #	#DIV/0!	#####	#VALUE!	#VALUE!	
L A:C to R A:C #	#VALUE!	#####	#VALUE!	#VALUE!	
R:P C:C*	#VALUE!	#####	#VALUE!	#VALUE!	
L:P C:C *	#VALUE!	#####	#VALUE!	#VALUE!	

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2 Cushing Overview

Screening investigations: (exclude exogenous glucocorticoids)

- 1.1 Overnight 1 mg dexamethasone suppression test
- 1.2 Late night or 11pm salivary cortisol
- 1.3 24-hour UFC

Consider additional screening tests (if above results are equivocal or discrepant or to exclude pseudo-Cushing's)

- 1.4 2-day low dose oral dexamethasone suppression
- 1.5 Dexamethasone-CRH test
- 1.6 IV 4 mg dexamethasone suppression test

Cushing's syndrome confirmed – measure plasma ACTH

- Suppressed ACTH (< 10ng/L or 2 pmol/L) – adrenal imaging studies for ACTH independent Cushing's
- Normal or elevated ACTH (> 20ng/L or 4 pmol/L) – proceed to further differential diagnostic tests for ACTH dependent Cushing's

Differential diagnosis of ACTH-dependent Cushing's syndrome

Differentiate between pituitary and ectopic source of ACTH

- A. High Dose 8 mg Dexamethasone Suppression Test (not required if IV 4mg dexamethasone test already performed)
- B. Peripheral CRH Test
- C. Bilateral Inferior Petrosal Sinus Sampling

2.1 OVERNIGHT DEXAMETHASONE SUPPRESSION TEST (1 mg DST)

RATIONALE:

Almost all sources of inappropriate ACTH or cortisol hypersecretion secretion will not be inhibited by 1 mg dexamethasone, therefore this is an excellent screening test.

PREPARATION & PROCEDURE:

1. Exclude exogenous glucocorticoid use and medications that may induce metabolism of dexamethasone. Ensure female patients are not on oestrogen therapy.
2. Dexamethasone 1 mg (2x 0.5 mg tablets) to be given to patient (prescription of dexamethasone may be required)
3. Patient instructed to take dexamethasone at 11 pm.
4. Patient to present to laboratory collection centre for blood test between 8-9am for serum cortisol and ACTH.

Time	Procedure	Comment
11pm	Take 1 mg dexamethasone tablets with water	Ensure strict compliance.
8-9am the next morning	Cortisol	Dexamethasone level available if compliance queried

INTERPRETATION:

Test outcome	Suggested comment:
Normal 1mg DST	A morning cortisol of < 50 nmol/L after 1 mg dexamethasone administered overnight indicates normal suppression of the hypothalamic pituitary adrenal axis.
Abnormal 1mg DST	A morning cortisol \geq 50 nmol/L after 1 mg dexamethasone administered overnight suggests hypercortisolism.

False positive responses – non-compliance, malabsorption, drugs inducing the hepatic metabolism of dexamethasone (phenytoin, carbamazepine, phenobarbital, rifampicin), drugs elevating CBG (oestrogens), chronic kidney disease, acute illness and pseudo-Cushing's (depression, alcohol abuse, eating disorders).

False negative responses – nephrotic syndrome (\downarrow CBG), renal dialysis, chronic liver disease (reduced metabolism and clearance of dexamethasone).

Sensitivity 98-100%, Specificity 85%

NOTES:

25% of hospitalised inpatients will have an abnormal 1 mg dexamethasone suppression test, if possible, investigations should be delayed until acute illness has subsided.

2.2 LATE NIGHT SALIVARY CORTISOL

PREPARATION & PROCEDURE:

1. Patient to collect Salivettes from clinic or laboratory collection centre.
2. Patient should chew on Salivette for 2 minutes (or until saturated with saliva) between 11pm to midnight prior to brushing their teeth, and not within 30 mins of eating or drinking.
3. Minimum of two separate samples should be collected.
4. Salivary cortisol is stable at room temperature. Patient should drop or post Salivettes back to laboratory collection centre.
5. Smokers should avoid cigarette smoking on the day of the test.

Time	Procedure	Comment
11pm	Chew on salivette provided for 1-2 minutes until saturated.	Collect prior to brushing teeth and nil by mouth for at least 30 mins prior to collection.

INTERPRETATION:

Normal response – Consult reference intervals provided by the laboratory.

False positive responses – smokers and especially patients who chew tobacco, contamination of salivettes with corticosteroid, bleeding of the gum, shift workers.

False negative responses - non-compliance with collection procedure (drinking water dilutes the sample), cyclical Cushing's.

NOTES:

An excellent test to use in the investigation of cyclical Cushing's syndrome where initial screening tests are negative. Repeat frequently over expected cycle e.g. weekly for 1-2 months as required.

2.3 24 HOUR URINARY FREE CORTISOL (UFC)

PREPARATION & PROCEDURE:

1. Patient to collect urinary bottle (no preservative) from the collection centre.
2. Ensure complete 24-hour urine collection (laboratory will provide instruction).
3. Avoid excessive water drinking (>3L daily) and avoid glucocorticoid containing preparations.
4. Suggest 2 x UFC on two separate occasions.

Time	Procedure	Comment
Day 1	Discard first morning void in toilet, patient record starting time, subsequent urine collected into bottle.	
Day 2	Last urine collected into bottle is starting time of Day 1	Send bottle to laboratory for UFC and creatinine

INTERPRETATION :

Normal response – Consult the reference interval provided by the laboratory. The laboratory should measure urine creatinine to assess adequacy of collection.

False positive responses – Over 24-hour urine collection. Excessive urine volume.

False negative responses - Inadequate 24-hour urine collection, renal impairment, cyclical Cushing's.

2.4 2-DAY LOW DOSE DEXAMETHASONE SUPPRESSION TEST (LDDST)

PREPARATION & PROCEDURE:

1. Exclude exogenous glucocorticoid use and medications that may induce metabolism of dexamethasone. Ensure female patients are not on oestrogen therapy.
2. Baseline serum cortisol and plasma ACTH to be taken prior to administration of dexamethasone.
3. Dexamethasone 0.5 mg (require total of eight tablets of 0.5 mg tablets for this test) to be given to patient (prescription of dexamethasone may be required)
4. Patient instructed to take dexamethasone 0.5 mg at ***exactly*** 6-hourly intervals.
 Option A: 9am, 3pm, 9pm, 3am (patient to set alarm clock for 3am), 9am, 3pm, 9pm, 3am, last blood test 9am (6 hrs after last dexamethasone dose)
 Option B: 8am, 2pm, 8pm, 2am (patient to set alarm clock for 2am), 8am, 2pm, 8pm, 2am, last blood test 8am (6 hrs after last dexamethasone dose)
5. Patient to present to laboratory collection centre for blood test at exactly 9am for serum cortisol for two consecutive days. Two separate request forms should be given to patient.
 1st request form “Baseline serum cortisol and plasma ACTH”.
 2nd request form “2-day Dex Suppression – Day 2 serum cortisol”

Time	Procedure	Comment
Day 0 (Baseline) 8-9 am	Blood test for cortisol and ACTH (baseline) Bring completed urine collection to lab.	
Day 1: 9 am	Patient to take 0.5 mg dexamethasone	
Day 1: 3pm	Patient to take 0.5 mg dexamethasone	
Day 1: 9pm	Patient to take 0.5 mg dexamethasone	
Day 1: 3 am	Patient to take 0.5 mg dexamethasone	Patient to set alarm clock for 3am to take the Dex tablet.
Day 2: 9am	Patient to take 0.5 mg dexamethasone. Start second urine collection if requested.	
Day 2: 3pm	Patient to take 0.5 mg dexamethasone	
Day 2: 9pm	Patient to take 0.5 mg dexamethasone	
Day 2: 3 am	Patient to take 0.5 mg dexamethasone	Patient to set alarm clock for 3am to take the Dex tablet.
Day 3: 9 am (end of test)	Blood test for cortisol and ACTH (day 2)	

INTERPRETATION:

Normal response = Serum cortisol < 50 nmol/L

False positive responses – non-compliance, malabsorption, drugs inducing the hepatic metabolism of dexamethasone (phenytoin, carbamazepine, phenobarbital, rifampicin), drugs elevating CBG (oestrogens), chronic kidney disease.

False negative responses – nephrotic syndrome (↓CBG), renal dialysis, chronic liver disease (reduced metabolism and clearance of dexamethasone).

Sensitivity 96%, Specificity 70%.

2.5 DEXAMETHASONE-CRH TEST

RATIONALE:

Patients with pseudo-Cushing's maintain sensitivity to negative feedback with glucocorticoid and will be unable to mount a pituitary-adrenal response to CRH when pre-treated with low dose dexamethasone. Conversely, patients with CS are mostly insensitive to low-dose dexamethasone suppression and will display unsuppressed cortisol levels and, in patients with a pituitary ACTH-secreting tumour, the pituitary will respond to CRH stimulation.

PREPARATION & PROCEDURE:

1. Exclude exogenous glucocorticoid use and medications that may induce metabolism of dexamethasone. Ensure female patients are not on oestrogen therapy.
2. Baseline serum cortisol and plasma ACTH to be taken prior to administration of dexamethasone.
3. Dexamethasone 0.5 mg (require total of eight tablets of 0.5 mg tablets for this test) to be given to patient (prescription of dexamethasone may be required)
4. Patient instructed to take dexamethasone 0.5 mg at ***exactly*** 6-hourly intervals. (1200, 1800, 2400, 0600, 1200, 1800, 2400, 0600)
5. Blood test at 0800 for cortisol and ACTH
6. Inject CRH (1 µg/kg up to 100µg) at 0800 immediately after blood test (see peripheral CRH test protocol for more details)
7. Blood test for cortisol 15 minutes after CRH

Time	Procedure	Comment
Day 1 (Baseline) 8-9 am	Blood test for cortisol and ACTH	
Day 1: 1200	Patient to take 0.5 mg dexamethasone	
Day 1: 1800	Patient to take 0.5 mg dexamethasone	
Day 1: 2400	Patient to take 0.5 mg dexamethasone	
Day 2: 0600	Patient to take 0.5 mg dexamethasone	
Day 2: 1200	Patient to take 0.5 mg dexamethasone	
Day 2: 1800	Patient to take 0.5 mg dexamethasone.	
Day 2: 2400	Patient to take 0.5 mg dexamethasone	
Day 3: 0600	Patient to take 0.5 mg dexamethasone	
Day 3: 0800	Blood test for cortisol and ACTH	
Day 3: 0800	Inject 1 µg/kg CRH	
Day 3: 0815	Blood test for cortisol	

INTERPRETATION:

Normal or pseudo-Cushing :

Post dexamethasone : cortisol < 38 nmol/L AND

Post dex-CRH : cortisol < 38 nmol/L

Cushing's Disease:

Post dexamethasone : cortisol > 38 nmol/L

Post dex-CRH : cortisol > 38 nmol/L

False positive responses – non-compliance, malabsorption, drugs inducing the hepatic metabolism of dexamethasone (phenytoin, carbamazepine, phenobarbital, rifampicin), drugs elevating CBG (oestrogens), chronic kidney disease

False negative responses – nephrotic syndrome (↓CBG), renal dialysis, chronic liver disease (reduced metabolism and clearance of dexamethasone).

2.6 IV 4 mg DEXAMETHASONE SUPPRESSION TEST

PREPARATION & PROCEDURE:

Patient admitted for day procedure

1. Ensure female patients are not on oestrogen therapy
2. Insertion of IV cannula
3. Samples for baseline serum cortisol to be collected at two time-points (-60mins, -5 mins) prior to dexamethasone infusion. Commence -60 mins sampling at 0830h
4. Dexamethasone infusion 1 mg/h for 4 hours (1x4 mg ampoule of dexamethasone in 500 ml Normal Saline running at 125 ml/hr) commencing at 0930h
5. Samples for serum cortisol to be collected 3, 4 and 5 hours post infusion. Ensure blood collection is taken opposite the infusion site.
6. Patient to present to the lab the following day for serum cortisol at 9:00 am and 9:30 am (unless patient remains an inpatient)

Time	Procedure	Comment
Day1	Insertion of IV cannula	
-60 minutes (Baseline, 08:30)	cortisol	
-5 minutes	cortisol	
0 minutes (09:30)	IV Dex infusion commences for 4 hours duration.	4mg dexamethasone in 500 ml Normal Saline at 125 ml/hr
+ 3 hrs	cortisol	Ensure blood collection is taken opposite the infusion site
+4 hrs	cortisol	Completion of the 4 hr Dex infusion
+5 hrs	cortisol	Patient sent home after blood test
Day 2 +23.5h (9:00)	cortisol	Patient returns for blood test
+24h (9:30)	cortisol	

INTERPRETATION:

Diagnosis of Cushing's syndrome: (2)

- Day 2 serum cortisol level (mean of +23.5h and +24h cortisol values) >130 nmol/L or >20% of baseline cortisol (Day 1 at -60 minutes)
- Sensitivity 100%, Specificity 96%
- Cushing's disease tends to partially suppress on Day 1 with rebound increase on Day 2, while ectopic ACTH patients rarely suppress during the infusion.

2.7 ACTH Dependent Cushing's Syndrome

2.7.1 HIGH DOSE DEXAMETHASONE SUPPRESSION TEST (HDDST)

Overnight High Dose 8 mg Dexamethasone Suppression Test

PREPARATION & PROCEDURE:

1. Exclude exogenous glucocorticoid use and medications that may induce metabolism of dexamethasone. Ensure female patients are not on oestrogen therapy.
2. Ensure patient already had baseline morning serum cortisol
3. Dexamethasone 8mg (2x 4 mg tablets) to be given to patient (prescription of dexamethasone may be required)
4. Patient instructed to take dexamethasone at 11 pm.
5. Patient to present to laboratory collection centre for blood test between 8-9am for serum cortisol and ACTH.

Time	Procedure	Comment
8 am	cortisol	Ensure patient already had baseline morning cortisol.
11pm	Take 8 mg dexamethasone tablets	Ensure strict compliance.
8-9am the next morning	cortisol	Dexamethasone level available if compliance queried

INTERPRETATION:

Decrease in serum cortisol >50% is suggestive of pituitary Cushing's disease. Most Cushing's disease patients have a cortisol < 140 nmol/L, normal subjects have undetectable cortisol post 8mg dexamethasone suppression.

HOWEVER, 10% of patients with ectopic ACTH secretion suppress with high dose dexamethasone and some patients with pituitary tumours fail to suppress. (Sensitivity 81%, Specificity 79%)

2.7.2 PERIPHERAL CRH TEST

RATIONALE:

This test may be combined with bilateral inferior petrosal sinus sampling (BIPSS) or can be performed prior to BIPSS to provide a diagnosis of Cushing's Disease along with appropriate MRI finding and suppressed high dose dexamethasone test to avoid the need for BIPSS.

PREPARATION & PROCEDURE:

1. Order CRH (100 µg)
2. Baseline weight and blood pressure
3. Patient should be supine during the test
4. Insertion of IV cannula
5. Baseline plasma ACTH and serum cortisol collection (-5 and -1 minutes)
6. CRH to be given as an IV bolus over 30-60 seconds (1 µg/kg up to a maximum of 100 µg).
7. Warned patient of potential side-effects from CRH: flushing, metallic taste in mouth, transient hypotension
8. Collect plasma ACTH and cortisol post CRH injection at +15, +30, +45, +60 and +90 minutes.

Time	Procedure	Comment
-5 min	ACTH and cortisol	
-1 min	ACTH and cortisol	
0 min	IV CRH over 30-60 seconds	Warn patient of side-effects
15 min	ACTH and cortisol	
30 min	ACTH and cortisol	
45 min	ACTH and cortisol	
60 min	ACTH and cortisol	
90 min	ACTH and cortisol	

INTERPRETATION:

There is no universal agreement on blood test interval and cut off.

Pituitary Cushing's disease is more likely than ectopic ACTH production if:

- Peak ACTH increment of >50% from mean basal values (Sensitivity 86%, Specificity 90%). (8,9)
- increase in peak cortisol concentration \geq 30% above the mean basal values (Sensitivity 61%, Specificity 70%). (8)

Note :

- CRH used in Australia is recombinant human CRH rather than Ovine CRH used in Nieman study. (3)
- Peak ACTH has higher diagnostic accuracy than cortisol.

2.7.3 BILATERAL INFERIOR PETROSAL SINUS SAMPLING

RATIONALE:

In ACTH dependent Cushing's syndrome, to differentiate whether the source of excessive ACTH is central pituitary Cushing's disease or peripheral ectopic ACTH syndrome. IPSS might not be required if pituitary adenoma > 6mm AND cortisol suppressed to high dose dexamethasone AND ACTH/ cortisol rose with peripheral CRH test.

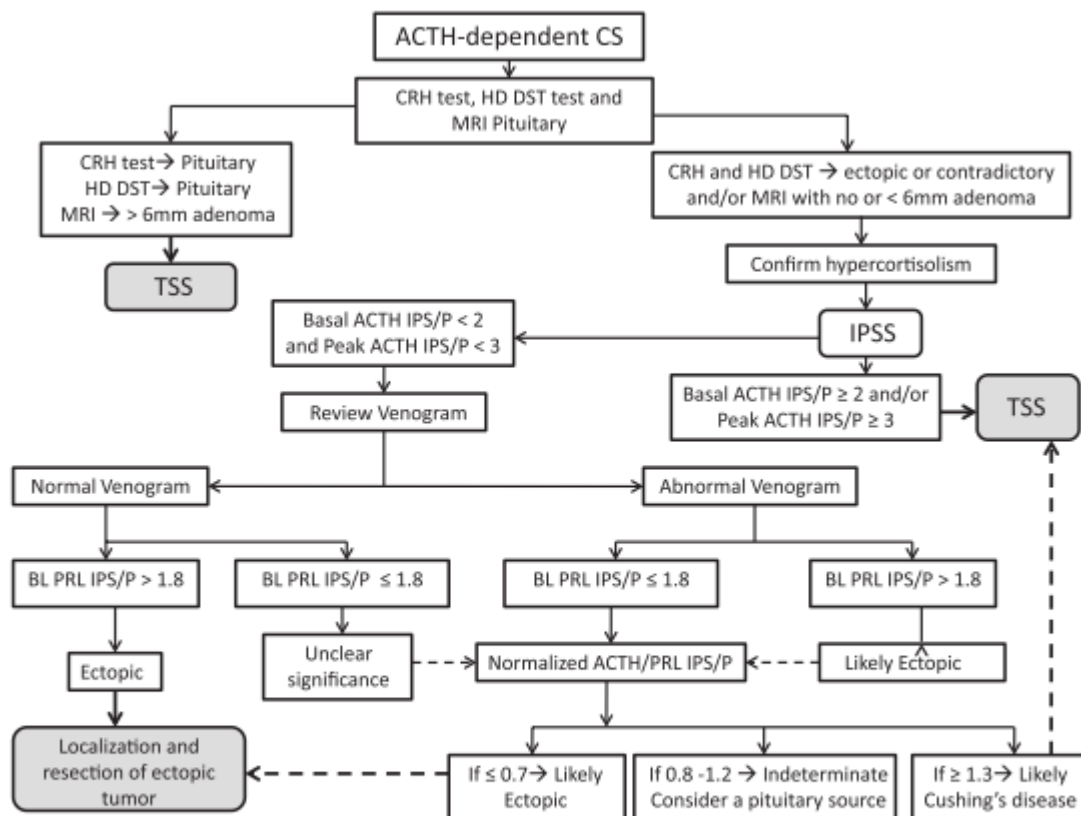
PREPARATION & PROCEDURE:

1. Book experienced interventional radiologist, discuss if patient on blood thinning agents.
2. Confirm active phase of Cushing's by saliva cortisol at midnight prior to the test, liaise with laboratory regarding turn-around time and alert them to the BIPSS booking. Metyrapone and ketoconazole should be stopped 1 week prior to test.
3. Fast the patient from midnight for a morning procedure
4. Under radiological guidance in the Radiology Department, catheters are placed in the left and right inferior petrosal sinuses.
5. Blood is collected at -5 min and -2 min before CRH administration, from left, right petrosal catheters and peripheral vein to measure ACTH and prolactin.
6. CRH (1 µg/kg, maximum dose up to 100 µg) is given intravenously at 0 min.
7. Further samples to measure ACTH and Prolactin are collected from left and right petrosal sinus and peripheral vein at + 2, 5, 10 and 15 minutes post CRH.

Time	Procedure	Comment
- 5 min	ACTH and prolactin from left, right petrosal sinus and peripheral vein	1 x 4 ml EDTA tube from each site
- 2 min	ACTH and prolactin from left, right petrosal sinus and peripheral vein	1 x 4 ml EDTA tube from each site
0 min	IV CRH (1 µg/kg, up to 100 µg)	Warn patient of side-effects of flushing and hypotension
+ 2 min	ACTH and prolactin from left, right petrosal sinus and peripheral vein	1 x 4 ml EDTA tube from each site
+ 5 min	ACTH and prolactin from left, right petrosal sinus and peripheral vein	1 x 4 ml EDTA tube from each site
+10 min	ACTH and prolactin from left, right petrosal sinus and peripheral vein	1 x 4 ml EDTA tube from each site
+15 min	ACTH and prolactin from left, right petrosal sinus and peripheral vein	1 x 4 ml EDTA tube from each site

INTERPRETATION

- A central to peripheral ACTH ratio of ≥ 2 pre CRH and / or a ratio of ≥ 3 post CRH is consistent with Cushing's disease. (5) Sensitivity and specificity 94%
- IPSS has limited utility in localization of ACTH-secreting pituitary adenomas
- Maximal IPS/ peripheral ratio is achieved at 5 minutes in 90% of Cushing's Disease, 1% achieved the maximum ratio at 15 minutes. The 2 minutes time point was found to have the best diagnostic accuracy. (5)
- If the above ratios were not achieved on at least one side, then check for adequacy of petrosal sinus catheterisation. Petrosal sinus prolactin level > 1.8 times peripheral prolactin level indicates adequate petrosal sinus cannulation. (see diagram below) (7) In that setting, pituitary ACTH/PRL to peripheral ACTH/PRL gradient of >0.8 is suggestive of Cushing's disease. A pituitary ACTH/PRL to peripheral ACTH/PRL gradient of <0.6 is indicative of ectopic ACTH syndrome.
- False results occur if patient was not in active phase of hypercortisolism at the time of testing. Late night saliva cortisol before IPSS can assist in determining whether cyclical Cushing patients are in active phase before proceeding with the test.



Suggested algorithm for evaluation of ACTH-dependent Cushing's syndrome. BL, Baseline; CS, Cushing's syndrome; HD DST, high-dose dexamethasone suppression test; PRL, prolactin; IPSS, inferior petrosal sinus sampling; IPS/P, inferior petrosal sinus to peripheral; TSS, transsphenoidal surgery.

Figure adapted from reference 7.

NOTES:

- ACTH and prolactin can be analysed using a single 4 ml EDTA tube in most centres. This vastly reduces the number of tubes and volume of blood required for IPSS and need to be discussed with the laboratory.
- Side effects of CRH includes flushing and hypotension. Rare complications during IPSS include brain stem injury, (6) deep venous thrombosis, pulmonary embolism and venous subarachnoid haemorrhage.
- Anticoagulation with heparin can reduce prothrombotic complications.

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3 Hypopituitarism

3.1 INSULIN TOLERANCE TEST

RATIONALE

To assess the integrity of the hypothalamic pituitary adrenal axis in patients with suspected secondary adrenal insufficiency

To assess the integrity of the growth hormone axis in patients with suspected growth hormone deficiency

PREPARATION AND PROCEDURE:

1. The test should not be undertaken in patients with ischaemic heart disease, cerebrovascular disease, cardiac arrhythmias or epilepsy. The test should only be done with caution in an experienced unit in patients with morning cortisol < 100 nmol/L, or >70 years of age.
2. Patients should provide written informed consent prior to the procedure.
2. Fast (water only) and no smoking from midnight the night before the test. Omit glucocorticoids; hydrocortisone after 1600h the day before (at least 16h) and prednis(ol)one from 0800h the day before (24h).
3. Baseline weight, pulse and BP.
4. ECG.
5. Insert an 18-20g cannula with a three-way tap into an antecubital vein. Secure venous access is crucial prior to commencing the test. The cannula should both flush freely and draw easily.
6. **The dose of insulin should be determined by the requesting endocrinologist prior to the procedure. The table below serves as a guide only.**

Insulin doses for adults ≥18 years:

Dose Classification	Condition	Insulin dose (units/kg)
Low dose	High probability of hypopituitarism	0.1
Standard dose	BMI <30 kg/m ² , non-diabetic	0.15
Insulin resistant dose	Obese (BMI >30 kg/m ²) and/or metabolic syndrome with fasting glucose >5.5 mmol/L	0.2
High dose	Active acromegaly or Cushing's syndrome, type 2 diabetes	0.3

8. The insulin should be diluted to 10 units/mL in 0.9% saline to ensure accurate dosing.

9. Regular human insulin (Novorapid, Actrapid, Humulin R) 100 units/ml. 0.5 mL (50 units) + 4.5 mL 0.9% saline in a 5 ml syringe. The final dose should then be drawn up in a 1 mL or 2 mL syringe according to whether the final dose is <10 units or >10 units.
10. Point of care (measured on the venous sample) and plasma glucose should be measured throughout the test, but the final determination of adequate hypoglycaemia should be made on the basis of the plasma glucose result.
11. Take baseline samples at -5 mins (Glucose, cortisol, GH) and 0 min (Glucose, cortisol, GH, ACTH), then insulin iv over 1 minute immediately following blood sampling
12. Repeat samples at 20, 30 and 40 minutes
13. If glucose has not fallen to ≤ 2.2 mmol/L, administer second insulin dose 50% higher than the initial dose

* Repeat insulin dosing in the event of inadequate hypoglycaemia:

If glucose remains >2.2 mmol/L and there are no hypoglycaemic symptoms at 40 min, a second dose of iv insulin should be given at 50% higher than the initial bolus.

This should represent a new time 0 minutes, with sampling at 20, 30, 40, 60, 90 and 120 minutes after the second injection.

If glucose remains >2.2 mmol/L after the second dose, a third dose of insulin double the initial dose can be considered. However, by then both patient and investigator may be more willing to abandon the procedure.

14. An oral carbohydrate solution (e.g. lemonade[†]) and 50% glucose for intravenous use must be available to treat hypoglycaemia if required. Hydrocortisone 100 mg for intravenous use should also be available if required. (see notes for glucose rescue)
15. A carbohydrate meal should be given at the end of the test. For patients at high risk of hypopituitarism in whom the serum glucose has been slow to recover, consider hydrocortisone 50 mg IV at the completion of sampling.

PROCEDURE:

Time	Procedure	Comment
-15 minutes	Glucose, cortisol, GH	
0 minutes	Glucose, ACTH, cortisol, GH, then insulin iv over 1 minute immediately following blood sampling	
20 minutes	Glucose, cortisol, GH	
30 minutes	Glucose, cortisol, GH	
40 minutes	Glucose, ACTH, cortisol, GH	If glucose has not fallen to ≤ 2.2 mmol/L, administer second insulin dose 50% higher than the initial dose *
60 minutes	Glucose, cortisol, GH	
90 minutes	Glucose, cortisol, GH	
120 minutes	Glucose, cortisol, GH	

INTERPRETATION:

- Adequate hypoglycaemia defined as serum glucose ≤ 2.2 mmol/L
- Normal response for cortisol: peak cortisol ≥ 500 nmol/L (or cortisol cut-off specified for that assay) at any time of the test
- Abnormal response for cortisol: peak cortisol < 500 nmol/L
(Cortisol cut-off is assay dependent. Ideally local reference interval should be established based on cortisol assay used.)
- GH > 5 $\mu\text{g/L}$ excludes GH deficiency, GH < 3 $\mu\text{g/L}$ consistent with GH deficiency. Proposed PBS criteria for treatment of adult GH deficiency in Australia is a peak of < 2.5 $\mu\text{g/L}$.

NOTES:

Glucose rescue:

Intravenous glucose should be administered in the event of severe hypoglycaemia defined as **any of the following:**

- Plasma glucose ≤ 1.5 mmol/L
- Altered level of consciousness
- Seizure

Initial dose recommended is 25 mL of 50% glucose.

If point of care glucose < 3.0 mmol/L after 5 minutes, repeat IV dose (if patient is unable to ingest oral liquid) OR administer lemonade‡ 200 mL orally.

For patients with mild-moderate hypoglycaemic symptoms, rescue with an oral carbohydrate solution is unnecessary. Early rescue may blunt the stress response and result in a falsely abnormal result.

If patient has definite hypoglycaemic symptoms for >10 minutes and point of care glucose remains ≤ 2.2 mmol/L, administer lemonade‡ 200 mL orally.

‡ Concentration of sugars in Sprite is 10.1g/100 mL (sucrose), so approximately 5g glucose and 5g fructose per 100 ml. Concentration in Schweppes lemonade is similar at 11g/100 ml.

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3.2 OVERNIGHT METYRAPONE TEST

RATIONALE:

- Patients with suspected secondary adrenal insufficiency due to pituitary or hypothalamic dysfunction may have a normal cortisol response to Synacthen and require a test of the entire HPA axis. The overnight metyrapone test provides a good alternative to the ITT, particularly if there are contraindications to performing an ITT or assessment of GH status is not required.
- Metyrapone inhibits the last step (11-hydroxylation) in the synthesis of cortisol. The negative feedback inhibition of cortisol on ACTH is thereby reduced, leading to elevated ACTH and an increased 11-deoxycortisol in normal individuals.

PREPARATION & PROCEDURE:

- If patient is taking glucocorticoid replacement, the morning glucocorticoid tablets should be taken but the evening dose is **NOT TO BE TAKEN**.
- Metyrapone comes as a 250 mg capsule
- Between 11pm and midnight, patient is to have 30 mg/kg Metyrapone, rounded up to the nearest 250 mg and maximum dose 3 g.
 - e.g. an 80 kg person would take 2.5 g (10 capsules)
- Take with a glass of milk and a snack.
- Remind patient that if they forget to have the metyrapone tablets, then not to present for a blood test the following morning.
- **The patient is not to have their morning glucocorticoid tablets prior to blood test.**
- Between 0800h and 0900h, take blood sample for 11-deoxycortisol, cortisol and ACTH.
- The patient should then have their usual morning glucocorticoid medication if prescribed.

PROCEDURE:

Time	Procedure	Comment
Day 0	Withhold evening dose of glucocorticoid	
Day 0 23:00-24:00	Metyrapone 30 mg/kg (Max 3 g)	Take with a glass of milk and a snack.
Day 1	Withhold morning dose of glucocorticoid	
Day 1 08:00 – 09:00	11-deoxycortisol, cortisol and ACTH	After blood test, can take usual morning glucocorticoid medication if prescribed

INTERPRETATION:

If cortisol <200 nmol/L, metyrapone inhibition of cortisol and subsequent ACTH stimulation has been adequate (i.e. test interpretable)

11-deoxycortisol: >200 nmol/L – normal.

<200 nmol/L – secondary adrenal insufficiency

NOTES

- In a large series from Ireland¹, side effects only occurred in 7/398 patients having 576 tests. Side effects include nausea and vomiting, dizziness, nightmares.
- The risk of adrenal crisis from acute cortisol deficiency is very low, but the test should not be performed in patients with suspected primary adrenal insufficiency.
- Some centres advocate giving the patients oral hydrocortisone or cortisone acetate to take home in case of severe symptoms of acute cortisol deficiency

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3.3 GLUCAGON STIMULATION TEST

RATIONALE:

Glucagon is a hormone that stimulates glycogenolysis in the liver as well as ACTH and growth hormone release from the pituitary with peak GH response after 90-180 minutes. Glucagon stimulation test is recommended as the alternative to ITT for diagnosis of adult GH deficiency based on its reproducibility and safety, Glucagon also stimulated adrenal production of cortisol in subjects with adequate endogenous ACTH. (6)

Rarely glucagon may be associated with headaches or vomiting and there is a small risk of late hypoglycaemia. This test should not be performed in malnourished subjects.

PREPARATION:

- Test performed in the morning between 08:00 to 09:00 after fasting from midnight.
- In view of duration and potential late hypoglycaemia best performed as a Day Admission.
- Collect baseline GH, IGF-1, IGFBP-3, Cortisol, glucose.
- Give Glucagon 1 mg (1.5 mg if weight > 90 kg)
- Take additional blood samples at 90, 120, 150, 180, 210 and 240 minutes.

PROCEDURE:

Time	Procedure	Comment
Baseline	GH, IGF-1, IGFBP-3 Cortisol, glucose	
0 minute	IM glucagon	
90 minutes	GH, cortisol, glucose	Monitor capillary glucose
120 minutes	GH, cortisol, glucose	Monitor capillary glucose
150 minutes	GH, cortisol, glucose	Monitor capillary glucose
180 minutes	GH, cortisol, glucose	Monitor capillary glucose
210 minutes	GH, cortisol, glucose	Monitor capillary glucose
240 minutes	GH, cortisol, glucose	Monitor capillary glucose

NOTE:

In the event of hypoglycaemia (glucose <3) following glucagon obtain an immediate blood sample for glucose and GH followed by 10% IV dextrose (2 ml/kg) over 3 minutes. After 5 minutes recheck glucose using a point of care glucometer.

All patients should have a small snack before discharge.

INTERPRETATION:

Normal response:

- Any GH > 3 ug/L. (5, 7)
- Any Cortisol \geq 248 nmol/L (cortisol cut-off based on Siemens Centaur assay). (7)

REFERENCES:

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3.4 GONADOTROPHIN RELEASING HORMONE STIMULATION TEST

RATIONALE:

This test assists to differentiate severe delayed puberty vs hypogonadotropic hypogonadism. Gonadotrophin releasing hormone (GnRH, LHRH) is a hypothalamic decapeptide stimulating synthesis and rapid release of LH and FSH in the anterior pituitary. Leuprorelin (Lucrin, Abbott) is a synthetic GnRH analogue with similar action. An absent or sub-optimal response to its administration indicates hypofunction of the hypothalamus or pituitary.

PREPARATION:

- No specific preparation.
- Generally performed in the morning but may be at any time of the day.
- Leuprorelin (Lucrin, Abbott or alternative equivalent) 5,000 µg/ml is available in a multidose vial. Dose is 0.004 ml/kg given subcutaneously (e.g. 0.2 ml/50kg). Maximum dose 0.2 ml (1,000 ug).

PROCEDURE:

Time	Procedure	Comment
Baseline	LH, FSH plus E2(F)/Testosterone (M)	
0 minute	<i>Leuprorelin administration</i>	
30 minutes	LH, FSH	
60 minutes	LH, FSH	Typically peak response
120 minutes	LH, FSH	

INTERPRETATION:

Pre-pubertal peak LH response <5 mIU/L

Normal adult peak response 20-100 mIU/L

NOTES:

Patient should be observed for 5 minutes in case of allergic reaction although no such reaction has been documented.

Some historic protocols have utilised more frequent samples with no obvious benefit.

REFERENCES:

1. Kletter GB. Commentary: How Should We Diagnose and Monitor Central Precocious Puberty? Journal of Pediatric Endocrinology & Metabolism 2008; 21: 1105 - 6.
2. Ibanez L, Potau N, Zampolli M, Viridis R, Gussinye M, Carrascosa A, Saenger P & Vicens-Calvet E. Use of Leuprolide acetate response patterns in the early diagnosis of

pubertal disorders: Comparison with the gonadotropin - releasing hormone test. JCEM 1994; 78 (1): 30-5.

3. Resende EA, Lara BH, Reis JD, Ferreira BP, Pereira GA, & Borges MF. Assessment of Basal and Gonadotropin-Releasing Hormone-Stimulated Gonadotropins by Immunochemiluminometric and Immunofluorometric Assays in Normal Children. JCEM 2007; 92(4): 1424–9.

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4 Acromegaly

4.1 GROWTH HORMONE SUPPRESSION TEST

RATIONALE:

To diagnose acromegaly (growth hormone (GH) excess) when IGF-1 elevated or discordant with clinical presentation. Normal subjects suppress GH secretion in response to a glucose load, whereas acromegalic subjects fail to suppress GH secretion or show a paradoxical rise. Random GH has no role for diagnosis.

In post-op acromegalic patient with elevated IGF-1 or random GH $\geq 1.0 \mu\text{g/L}$ more than 12 weeks post-surgery, OGTT suppression is used to assess residual disease. This test cannot be used in patients already on somatostatin analogue.

PREPARATION:

1. The patient should fast overnight prior to the test.
2. Control hyperglycaemia prior to testing.

PROCEDURE:

1. Patient attends for blood test after 10 hr fast
2. Collect baseline glucose, GH and IGF-1
3. Give 75g oral glucose load
4. Collect Glucose and GH every 30 minutes for 2 hours

Time	Procedure/ Test	Comment
0 minute	Glucose, GH, IGF-1	
0 minute	75g oral glucose load	
30 minutes	Glucose, GH	
60 minutes	Glucose, GH	
90 minutes	Glucose, GH	
120 minutes	Glucose, GH	

INTERPRETATION:

Normal response: GH $< 1.0 \mu\text{g/L}$ at any time point

A nadir GH post glucose load $< 0.4 \mu\text{g/L}$ has been considered, but due to variable performance of the commercial GH assays, the 2014 Endocrine Society Clinical Practice Guideline recommended using a universal cut-off $< 1.0 \mu\text{g/L}$ for acromegalic diagnosis. Nadir GH post glucose load $< 0.4 \mu\text{g/L}$ is used as the definition for post-operative remission.

NOTES:

Poorly controlled diabetes mellitus, nutritional disorders (malnutrition, malabsorption, anorexia nervosa), renal disease and liver failure are associated with acquired GH insensitivity to glucose suppression, associated with risk of false-positive OGTT results.

REFERENCES:

1. Carmichael JD, Bonert VS, Mirocha JM, Melmed S. The Utility of Oral Glucose Tolerance Testing for Diagnosis and Assessment of Treatment Outcomes in 166 Patients with Acromegaly. *J Clin Endocrinol Metab* 2009; 94: 523–527.
2. Katznelson L, Laws ER, Jr., Melmed S, Molitch ME, Murad MH, Utz A, Wass JA, Endocrine S. Acromegaly: an endocrine society clinical practice guideline. *The Journal of clinical endocrinology and metabolism* 2014; 99:3933-3951

5 Hyperglycaemia investigation

5.1 ORAL GLUCOSE TOLERANCE TEST (OGTT)

RATIONALE:

To diagnose diabetes mellitus or gestational diabetes.

PREPARATION:

1. The oral carbohydrate intake should be normal for three days prior to testing.
2. The patient should fast from 10 pm the day prior to the morning OGTT test (water allowed).
3. For diagnosis of gestational diabetes, the test is conducted between 26-28 weeks.

PROCEDURE:

1. The test is performed in the morning, patient should rest during the test and may not eat or smoke, drinking water is permitted.
2. At baseline, collect blood for fasting glucose measurement. Concurrently test glucose on a glucometer if available. If results are >10.0 mmol/L, consider terminating the test after discussion with requesting doctor as per local procedure.
3. Give glucose solution 75 g orally (check with laboratory for dose in children), consume within 5 minutes.
4. Collect blood hourly for 2 hours.
5. If the patient has any abnormal symptoms during the test (vomiting, sweating, tremors, unwell), discuss with medical personnel as per local procedure.

Time	Procedure/ Test	Comment
Baseline	Glucose (glucose testing on glucometer if available)	Consider terminating test if point of care fasting glucose >10 mmol/L as per local procedure
0 minute	75g oral glucose load within 5 minutes	
60 minutes	glucose	
120 minutes	glucose	

INTERPRETATION:

OGTT results in the **non-pregnant patient** are interpreted as below according to WHO criteria (4):

Plasma venous glucose (mmol/L)

Test Outcome:	Fasting		2 hrs post glucose load
Normal glucose tolerance	≤6.0	AND	<7.8
Impaired fasting glycaemia	6.1 – 6.9	AND	< 7.8
Impaired glucose tolerance	< 7.0	AND	7.8 – 11.0
Diabetes Mellitus	≥7.0	OR	≥11.1

OGTT results in the **pregnant patient** are interpreted as below according to ADIPS criteria (1):

Plasma venous glucose (mmol/L)

Test Outcome:	Fasting		1 hr		2 hrs post glucose load
Normal	≤ 5.0	AND	< 10.0	AND	< 8.5
Gestational diabetes mellitus	5.1–6.9	OR	≥10.0	OR	8.5–11.0
Diabetes mellitus in pregnancy	≥ 7.0	OR	*	OR	≥11.1

NOTES:

*there are no established criteria for the diagnosis of diabetes based on the 1-h post-load value

The above ADIPS criteria are not used in New Zealand, gestational diabetes mellitus is diagnosed if fasting ≥ 5.0 mmol/L and 2-h glucose ≥ 9 mmol/L.

REFERENCES:

1. Nankervis A, McIntyre HD, Moses R, Ross GP, Callaway L, Porter C, Jeffries W, Boorman C, De Vries B, McElduff A for the Australasian Diabetes in Pregnancy Society. ADIPS Consensus Guidelines for the Testing and Diagnosis of Gestational Diabetes Mellitus in Australia.
2. ADPSG Consensus Panel International association of diabetes and pregnancy study group's recommendations on the diagnosis and classification of hyperglycemia in pregnancy. *Diabetes Care* 2010; 33:676-682
3. HAPO Collaborative Research Group. Hyperglycemia and adverse pregnancy outcomes. *New Eng J Med* 2008; 358:1991-2002
4. World Health Organisation / International Diabetes Federation, Definition and Diagnosis of Diabetes Mellitus and Intermediate Hyperglycaemia, 2006. (Web address: <http://www.who.int/diabetes/publications/en/>).

6 Hypoglycaemia investigation

6.1 MIXED MEAL TEST

RATIONALE:

To trigger a hypoglycaemic episode which can be captured with plasma glucose and insulin in patients with post prandial hypoglycaemia. This is preferred to the OGTT for capturing hypoglycaemia.

PREPARATION:

Patient to fast (may drink water) from 2400 the night before test. Avoid smoking, undue exercise and alcohol. Withhold all non-essential medications.

Patient brings the Test Meal (Similar to one which provokes hypoglycemic symptoms) or a commercial meal can be provided (see Notes below).

PROCEDURE:

1. Insert intravenous cannula - usually into cubital fossa.
2. Take baseline blood for glucose, insulin, C-peptide, proinsulin
3. Give Test Meal (provided by patient, if possible). Test meal to be similar to that which the patient reports has caused symptoms. Record test meal on work sheet.
4. Collect blood specimens for glucose, insulin, C-peptide at times 0, +30, +60, +90, +120, +180, +210, +240, +270, +300 mins. Extra specimens taken if symptoms or signs of hypoglycaemia.
5. Record any symptoms experienced by patient. If hypoglycaemic symptom occurs prior to 300 minutes, take samples for Glucose, insulin, C-peptide, proinsulin, confirm glucose < 3.0 mmol/L, then correct hypoglycaemia.
6. If Whipple's triad is demonstrated a sample should also be collected for sulphonylurea analysis and insulin antibodies. Add request for proinsulin in baseline sample and hypoglycaemic sample only

Time	Procedure/ Test	Comment
Baseline	Glucose, insulin, C-peptide	Analyse proinsulin in baseline sample and hypoglycaemic sample only
0 minute	Mixed meal	
30 minutes	Glucose, insulin, C-peptide	If hypoglycaemia occurs prior to 300 minutes, take samples for Glucose, insulin, c-peptide, proinsulin, confirm glucose < 3.0 mmol/L, then correct hypoglycaemia.
60 minutes	Glucose, insulin, C-peptide	
90 minutes	Glucose, insulin, C-peptide	
120 minutes	Glucose, insulin, C-peptide	
180 minutes	Glucose, insulin, C-peptide	
210 minutes	Glucose, insulin, C-peptide	
240 minutes	Glucose, insulin, C-peptide	
270 minutes	Glucose, insulin, C-peptide	
300 minutes	Glucose, insulin, C-peptide	

INTERPRETATION:

Inappropriate endogenous hyperinsulinaemia findings are:

Plasma glucose < 3.0 mmol/L AND both of:

Insulin \geq 20 pmol/L (\geq 3.0 IU/L)

C-peptide \geq 200 pmol/L (\geq 0.2 nmol/L)

Ratios of insulin and glucose should not be used.

NOTES:

A standardised 470 kcal (1966 kJ) mixed meal (71 g carbohydrate, 8.5 g fat, 20 g protein) from commercially available solid and liquid supplements was recently validated (2). For comparison, the 75-gram glucose drink in a standard oral glucose tolerance test provides 300 kcal (1255 kJ).

Sample work Sheet – MIXED MEAL TEST

NAME:					DATE:
UR:					LOCATION:
DOB:					
MINS	ACTUAL TIME	MEDS. GIVEN	BSL	BLOOD TESTS	COMMENTS
-5				Glucose Insulin CPep	
0		Test meal (provided by patient)			Test Meal Contents:
				Glucose Insulin CPep	
				Glucose Insulin CPep	
				Glucose Insulin CPep	
				Glucose Insulin CPep	
				Glucose Insulin CPep	
				Glucose Insulin CPep	
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				Glucose Insulin CPep	
				Glucose Insulin CPep	

REFERENCES:

1. Cryer PE, Axelrod L, Grossman AB et al. Evaluation and management of adult hypoglycaemic disorders: an Endocrine Society clinical practice guideline. J Clin Endocrinol Metab 2009; 94 (3):709-728.
2. Shankar SS, Vella A, Raymond RH et al. Foundation for the National Institutes of Health beta-Cell Project T: standardized mixed-meal tolerance and arginine stimulation tests provide reproducible and complementary measures of beta-cell function: results from the foundation for the national institutes of health biomarkers consortium investigative series. Diabetes Care. 2016;39:1602–13.

6.2 PROLONGED OGTT

RATIONALE:

To capture a hypoglycaemic episode in patients with post-prandial hypoglycaemia, however a mixed meal test is preferable.

PREPARATION:

1. The oral carbohydrate intake should be normal for three days prior to testing.
2. The patient should fast from 10 pm the day prior to the morning OGTT test (water allowed).

PROCEDURE:

1. The test is performed in the morning, patient should rest during the test and may not eat or smoke, drinking water is permitted.
2. At baseline, collect blood for fasting glucose measurement.
3. Give glucose solution 75 g orally.
4. Collect blood glucose, insulin and C-peptide hourly for 3 hours.
5. If the patient has any abnormal symptoms during the test (vomiting, sweating, tremors, unwell), take blood sample immediately and discuss with medical personnel as per local procedure.

Time	Procedure/ Test	Comment
Baseline	Glucose, insulin, C-peptide	
0 minute	75g oral glucose load	Take blood samples immediately if hypoglycaemic symptoms.
60 minutes	Glucose, insulin, C-peptide	
120 minutes	Glucose, insulin, C-peptide	
180 minutes	Glucose, insulin, C-peptide	

INTERPRETATION:

Inappropriate endogenous hyperinsulinaemia findings are the same for the mixed meal test and 72 hr fast:

Plasma glucose < 3.0 mmol/L AND both of:

Insulin ≥ 20 pmol/L (≥ 3.0 IU/L)

C-peptide ≥ 200 pmol/L (≥ 0.2 nmol/L)

6.3 72 HOUR FAST

RATIONALE:

To trigger a fasting hypoglycaemic episode which can be captured with plasma glucose and insulin in patients in whom samples could not be captured during spontaneous hypoglycaemia.

PREPARATION:

1. IV access inserted and patient admitted to hospital.
2. The patient is to fast (nothing to eat) and is allowed only water, black tea or black coffee for the duration of the test. Patient is to remain active during waking hours.
3. Baseline blood tests for glucose, insulin, C-peptide (add proinsulin and beta-hydroxybutyrate if hypoglycaemic episode occurs during fast)
4. Capillary blood glucose taken 3-hourly and recorded.
5. Throughout the investigation blood samples are taken **every 6 hours** for:
 - 2 ml Fluoride EDTA - glucose
 - 8 ml Serum - **ON ICE** for insulin and C-peptide.
 - If capillary glucose falls below 3.3 mmol/L, increase blood sampling frequency to hourly.
6. If there are **symptoms** of hypoglycaemia during the test:
 - a. Notify the Endocrine Team
 - b. Record symptoms (*eg. drowsiness, mood change, anxiety, hunger, sweating or symptoms previously experienced by patient*)
 - c. Take blood samples **BEFORE** treating hypoglycaemia for:
 - i. 2 ml Fluoride EDTA - glucose
 - ii. 2x 8 ml Serum - **ON ICE** for insulin, C-peptide, and beta-hydroxybutyrate.

Do not terminate the test before medical review.

The medical officer may terminate the test if one of these conditions is met.

- A) Symptoms and/or signs of hypoglycaemia AND plasma glucose <2.5 mmol/L measured by either plasma glucose or whole blood on blood gas analyser OR
- B) If 72 hours have elapsed without symptoms

Once decision made to terminate fast.

7. Take blood samples for
 - Glucose
 - 2 x 8 ml Serum - **ON ICE** for insulin and C-peptide and beta-hydroxybutyrate, proinsulin, sulphonylurea screen and insulin antibody levels.
8. Administer 1mg glucagon IV before patient is fed and collect blood for glucose, beta-hydroxybutyrate at 10, 20, 30 minutes after glucagon.

9. Feed patient and ensure normoglycaemia

Time	Procedure/ Test	Comment
0 minute	Baseline glucose, insulin, C-peptide, (add proinsulin only if positive test) Commence Fast, 4-hourly capillary blood glucose.	allowed only water, black tea or black coffee
6 hours	Glucose, insulin, C-peptide.	If capillary glucose <3.3 mmol/L, check plasma glucose If plasma glucose <3.3 mmol/L, blood sampling hourly If symptomatic AND plasma glucose < 2.5 mmol/L, terminate fast
12 hours	Glucose, insulin, C-peptide.	
18 hours	Glucose, insulin, C-peptide.	
24 hours	Glucose, insulin, C-peptide.	
30 hours	Glucose, insulin, C-peptide.	
36 hours	Glucose, insulin, C-peptide.	
42 hours	Glucose, insulin, C-peptide.	
48 hours	Glucose, insulin, C-peptide.	
54 hours	Glucose, insulin, C-peptide.	
60 hours	Glucose, insulin, C-peptide.	
66 hours	Glucose, insulin, C-peptide.	
72 hours	Glucose, insulin, C-peptide.	If asymptomatic, plasma glucose \geq 2.5 mmol/L, terminate fast at 72 hours
Termination of fast	Glucose, insulin, C-peptide, beta-hydroxybutyrate, proinsulin, sulphonylurea screen, and insulin antibody levels. After samples taken, IV 1 mg glucagon	
10 minutes	Glucose, beta-hydroxybutyrate	
20 minutes	Glucose, beta-hydroxybutyrate	
30 minutes	Glucose, beta-hydroxybutyrate	
	Feed patient	Ensure normoglycaemia before discharge

INTERPRETATION:

Inappropriate endogenous hyperinsulinaemia (insulinoma, nesidioblastosis, post gastric bypass hypoglycaemia) findings are:

- Plasma glucose < 3.0 mmol/L AND:
- Insulin \geq 20.8 pmol/L (\geq 3.0 IU/L)
- C-peptide \geq 200 pmol/L
- Proinsulin \geq 5 pmol/L
- beta-hydroxybutyrate < 2.7 mmol/L
- plasma glucose increased by 1.4 mmol/L post glucagon injection

Patterns of findings during prolonged fasting									
Symptoms and/or signs	Glucose mmol/L	Insulin mIU/L	C-peptide pmol/L	Proinsulin pmol/L	β -Hydroxybutyrate mmol/L	Glucose increase after glucagon mmol/L	Circulating oral hypoglycaemic	Antibodies to insulin	Diagnostic interpretation
No	< 3.0	< 3	<200	< 5	> 2.7	< 1.4	No	Neg	Normal
Yes	< 3.0	>> 3	<200	< 5	\leq 2.7	> 1.4	No	Neg (Pos)	Exogenous insulin
Yes	< 3.0	\geq 3	\geq 200	\geq 5	\leq 2.7	> 1.4	No	Neg	Insulinoma, NIPHS, PGBH
Yes	< 3.0	\geq 3	\geq 200	\geq 5	\leq 2.7	> 1.4	Yes	Neg	Oral hypoglycaemic agent
Yes	< 3.0	>> 3	>>200	>> 5	\leq 2.7	> 1.4	No	Pos	Insulin autoimmune
Yes	< 3.0	< 3	<200	< 5	\leq 2.7	> 1.4	No	Neg	IGF
Yes	< 3.0	< 3	<200	< 5	> 2.7	< 1.4	No	Neg	Not insulin (or IGF)- mediated

Neg, negative; Pos, positive; NIPHS, noninsulinoma pancreatogenous hypoglycaemia syndrome ; PGBH, post gastric bypass hypoglycaemia.
Table copied from Journal of Clinical Endocrinology & Metabolism, March 2009, 94(3): 709-728 – "Evaluation and Management of Adult Hypoglycemic Disorders: An Endocrine Society Clinical Practice Guideline"

NOTES:

- Insulin, C-peptide and proinsulin clearance is reduced in renal failure, above cut-offs for these analytes might not apply.
- 75% of insulinomas are diagnosed after 24 hours fast, 90% at 48 hours.

REFERENCES:

Cryer PE, Axelrod L, Grossman AB et al. Evaluation and management of adult hypoglycaemic disorders: An Endocrine Society clinical practice guideline. J Clin Endocrinol Metab 2009; 94 (3):709-728.

6.4 CALCIUM STIMULATION TEST FOR INSULINOMA

RATIONALE:

Reserved for cases of suspected insulinoma that do not localize by conventional noninvasive means or if confirmation is required. The calcium stimulation test may also be useful in differentiating insulinoma from diffuse nesidioblastosis, especially if imaging is negative or inconclusive¹. The decision to proceed with calcium stimulation testing should be made in conjunction with the operating Endocrine surgeon. The test is based on the observation that exogenous intra-arterial calcium injection stimulates the release of insulin from tumor beta cells, but not from normal beta cells².

PREPARATION AND PROCEDURE:

1. Discontinue calcium channel blockers (may lead to severe hypoglycaemia during test) as well as non-essential medications and those with the potential to interfere with insulin secretion by insulinoma cells (such as diazoxide), 5 half-lives prior to the procedure.
2. Overnight fast – run dextrose infusion as required to avoid hypoglycaemia.
3. Visceral arteriography into
 - a. Superior mesenteric artery
 - b. Proximal splenic artery
 - c. Midsplenic artery
 - d. Gastroduodenal artery
 - e. Proper hepatic arteries
4. 10% calcium gluconate diluted to volume of 5 mL with normal saline is directly injected as a bolus into individual artery at a dose of 0.0125 mmol Ca²⁺/kg body weight (maximum total dose for entire procedure is 11.63 mmol or 93 mg Ca²⁺).
5. 5 mL blood samples are taken at 0, 20, 40 and 60 sec after calcium injection from the right hepatic vein for insulin levels.
6. Double check samples are labeled correctly with the time and arterial site injected with calcium.

Time	Procedure
Baseline	Insulin checked from right hepatic vein
0	Calcium bolus injected into selected artery, repeat procedure for each artery. <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Superior mesenteric Proximal artery2. Splenic artery3. Midsplenic artery4. Gastroduodenal artery5. Proper hepatic artery
20 seconds	Insulin checked from right hepatic vein
40 seconds	Insulin checked from right hepatic vein
60 seconds	Insulin checked from right hepatic vein

INTERPRETATION:

A greater than 2-fold rise in right hepatic vein insulin levels from 0 at times 20, 40 and /or 60 sec is required to localize an insulin secreting tumor in that portion of the pancreas supplied by the artery studied.

Artery from which positive response achieved from calcium stimulation	Tumour Localisation Site
Gastroduodenal artery or superior mesenteric artery	Pancreatic head and neck region
Proximal splenic or midsplenic artery	Pancreatic body and tail region
Proper hepatic arteries	Liver metastases

If a greater than 2-fold rise in insulin levels occurs with calcium injection into more than one artery, the dominant site is used to predict tumour localization (may represent overlap in tumour arterial supply). In a large (retrospective) study³, this correctly predicted tumour location in 84% (38 of 45 cases). False negative results occurred in 5 of 45 cases (11%) attributed to arterial anomalies/technical flaws. False positive occurred in 2 of 45 cases (4%) attributed to tumour necrosis or unexplained reasons. In a retrospective analysis of 240 patients with insulinoma at the Mayo Clinic, calcium stimulation test was performed in 25% of patients, with a sensitivity of 93% for the regionalization of functioning insulinomas⁴. Nesidioblastosis is suggested by a >2-fold rise in right hepatic vein insulin level following Ca injection in the gastroduodenal, superior mesenteric and splenic arteries but not the proper hepatic artery.

NOTES:

Procedure should be performed by experienced interventional radiologists. Hypoglycaemia can occur during the procedure.

REFERENCES:

1. Thompson SM, Vella A, Thompson GB, Rumilla KM, Service FJ, Grant CS, et al. Selective Arterial Calcium Stimulation With Hepatic Venous Sampling Differentiates Insulinoma From Nesidioblastosis. The Journal of clinical endocrinology and metabolism. 2015;100(11):4189-97.

2. Doppman JL, Chang R, Fraker DL, Norton JA, Alexander HR, Miller DL, et al. Localization of insulinomas to regions of the pancreas by intra-arterial stimulation with calcium. *Annals of internal medicine*. 1995;123(4):269-73.
3. Guettier JM, Kam A, Chang R, Skarulis MC, Cochran C, Alexander HR, et al. Localization of insulinomas to regions of the pancreas by intraarterial calcium stimulation: the NIH experience. *The Journal of clinical endocrinology and metabolism*. 2009;94(4):1074-80
4. Morera J, Guillaume A, Courtheoux P, Palazzo L, Rod A, Joubert M, et al. Preoperative localization of an insulinoma: selective arterial calcium stimulation test performance. *J Endocrinol Invest*. 2016;39(4):455-63.

7 Diabetes Insipidus

7.1 WATER DEPRIVATION TEST

RATIONALE:

For the diagnosis of polyuria-polydipsia syndrome.

PATIENT PREPARATION:

1. Document polyuria (i.e. > 3 L/24 hours or 40-50 ml/kg/24 hours)
 2. Exclude other reasons for polyuria such as hyperglycaemia and hypercalcaemia
 3. Check renal function and electrolytes and pituitary function including fT4, TSH and basal cortisol
 4. Check complete electrolytes and serum osmolality, copeptin (if available) and urine osmolality (i.e. 2nd urine sample after one hour) after overnight water deprivation (> 8 hours).
 - If urine osmolality is > 800 mOsm/kg, no further testing is required. In all other cases a classic water deprivation test is indicated. Note maximal urine osmolality ~1200 mOsm/kg.
 - * Depending on age and renal impairment, urine osmolality of > 600 mOsm/kg can be acceptable according to clinical judgment.**
- If copeptin testing is available:
- If copeptin levels are < 2.6 pmol/L after overnight fluid deprivation diagnosis of central diabetes insipidus is suggested
 - If copeptin levels are ≥ 21.4 pmol/L without prior thirsting the diagnosis of nephrogenic diabetes insipidus is likely and no further testing is required.
5. Patients should refrain from tobacco, alcohol and caffeine 24 hours prior to test.
 6. Stop DDAVP 24 hours prior to test

PROCEDURE:

1. Start water deprivation at 8pm for mild polyuria (i.e. 3-5 L/24h), at 12am for moderate polyuria (i.e. 5-8 L/24h) and at 8am for severe polyuria (i.e. >8 L/24h)
2. Before starting water deprivation, take baseline weight, blood pressure and pulse, baseline blood test for serum osmolality, electrolytes, renal function, copeptin (if available) plus baseline urine osmolality and urine sodium
3. Repeat weight, blood pressure, pulse, urine osmolality and urine sodium hourly from 8am onwards
4. Repeat blood test every 4 hours (i.e. 8am, 12pm and 4pm) and at termination of test immediately prior to injection of DDAVP
5. Duration of water deprivation period will vary for different patients. Indication for termination of water deprivation are any of the following:
 - a. - Urine osmolality plateaus (i.e. <30 mOsm/kg increase between two consecutive hourly measurements). This indicates maximal urinary concentrating ability.
 - b. - Weight loss of more than 3% of baseline weight
 - c. - Serum sodium levels > 150 mmol/L
 - d. - Urine osmolality > 800 mOsm/kg
6. Intravenous injection of 2 μ g DDAVP if termination urine osmolality is <800 mOsm/kg

7. 1 hour after DDAVP administration: repeat blood test with serum osmolality and electrolytes plus repeat urine osmolality and urine sodium

Time	Procedure	Comment
Baseline (8am)	Weight, BP, HR serum osmolality, U+Es (\pm copeptin) urine osmolality, sodium	
Hourly	weight, BP, HR urine osmolality and urine sodium	
12:00	serum osmolality, U+Es (\pm copeptin)	In the setting of ongoing severe polyuria, more frequent checks of serum osmolality, electrolytes and renal function may be required according to the treating physician
16:00	serum osmolality, U+Es (\pm copeptin)	In the setting of ongoing severe polyuria, more frequent checks of serum osmolality, electrolytes and renal function may be required according to the treating physician
Termination	serum osmolality, U+Es (\pm copeptin)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Urine osmolality plateaus (i.e. <30 mOsm/kg increase between two consecutive hourly measurements). This indicates maximal urinary concentrating ability - Weight loss of more than 3% of baseline weight - Serum sodium levels > 150 mmol/L - Urine osmolality > 800mOsm/kg
	IV 2 μ g DDAVP	
1 hour post DDAVP	Weight, BP, HR serum osmolality, U+Es (copeptin) urine osmolality, sodium	Patient to limit fluid intake to 500-800ml for next 24 hrs if urine concentrated post DDAVP

INTERPRETATION:

	Primary polydipsia	Nephrogenic Diabetes Insipidus	Complete Central Diabetes Insipidus	Partial Central Diabetes Insipidus
Baseline copeptin (pmol/L)	≥ 5	≥ 21.4	< 2.6	< 5
Serum osmol (mOsm/kg)	< 300	> 300	> 300	> 300
Urine osmol (mOsm/kg)	> 800 (300 – 800 if chronic)	< 300	< 300	300-800
Post DDAVP urine osmol Rise (%)	< 10%	< 50%	> 50%	10-50%

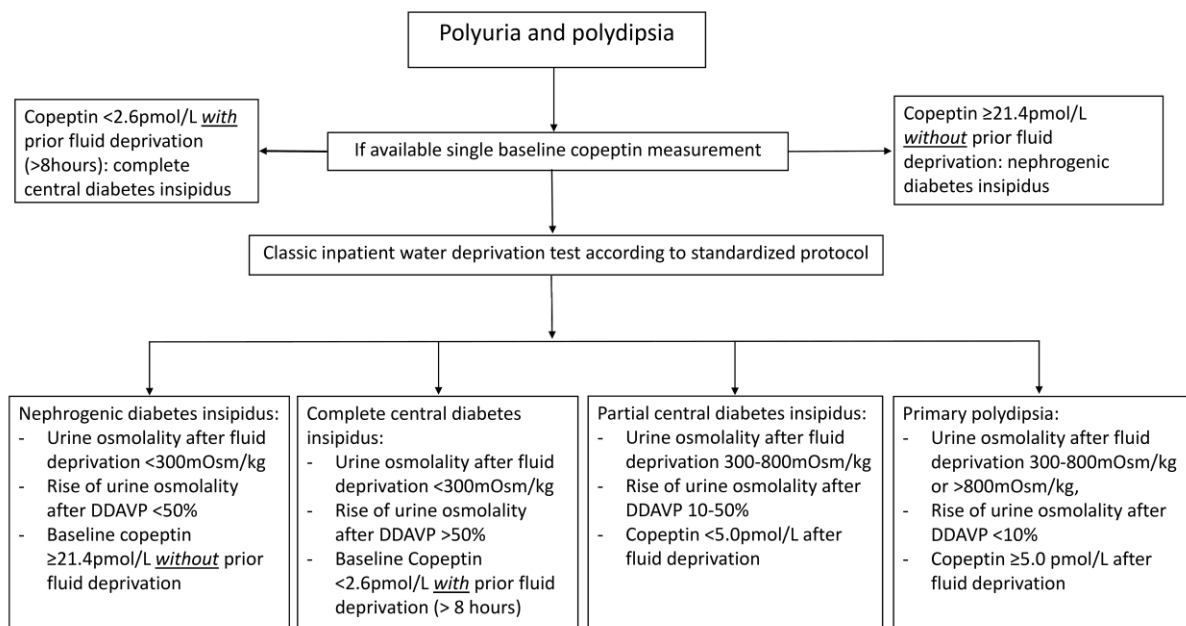


Figure: Diagnostic algorithm for the differential diagnosis of the polyuria-polydipsia syndrome (3)

NOTES:

- In the setting of severe ongoing polyuria, more frequent checks of serum osmolality, electrolytes and renal function may be required according to the treating physician.
- Hyponatraemia can occur due to excess water retention after administration of desmopressin, therefore patients should be instructed to restrict oral intake to 500-800 ml for the next 24 hours if urine is concentrated post DDAVP. (4)

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WATER DEPRIVATION TEST – Worksheet

Patient Label:

Date of Test:

Patient thirsting since:

Time	BP/HR	Weight kg	Urine Vol mL/hr	Urine Na mmol/L	Serum Na mmol/L	Serum Osm mosm/Kg
08:00						
09:00						
10:00						
11:00						
12:00						
13:00						
14:00						
15:00						
16:00						
IV 2 µg DDAVP						
17:00						

8 Thyroid

8.1 TRH TEST

RATIONALE:

The sole indication for the TRH test is the evaluation of elevated thyroid hormones (free T4 and free T3) in the setting of a normal or elevated TSH – the differential diagnosis of resistance to thyroid hormone versus a TSH secreting pituitary adenoma (TSH-oma).

The following should be considered:

1. It is essential to exclude heterophil antibody interference within the discordant thyroid function panel.
2. Once interference is excluded, and temporal pattern of discordant TFTs persists, other helpful tests include:
 - a. SHBG and CTX are elevated in hyperthyroidism (TSH-oma)
 - b. Alpha subunit elevated in 70% of TSH-oma (not helpful in post-menopausal women)
 - c. TFT testing in first degree relatives if available (thyroid hormone resistance)
 - d. **THRB gene test is available for testing of thyroid hormone resistance and is positive in 90% of RTH β .**

PREPARATION AND PROCEDURE:

- 1) The patient need not be fasting but should empty their bladder immediately prior to the test.
- 2) TSH is collected at baseline, 20 and 60 mins after IV bolus of 200 μ g of TRH over 1 minute

Time	Procedure	Comment
Baseline	TSH	
0 minute	IV bolus of 200 μ g of TRH over 1 minute *	Side effects: nausea, flushing, headache, micturition urgency
20 minutes	TSH	
60 minutes	TSH	

INTERPRETATION:

In normal individuals TSH increases 4-14 fold with a mean of 8.3 fold. ¹

Autonomously secreted TSH from a TSH-oma rarely increases following TRH. ^{2,3}

In the setting of thyroid hormone resistance there is a normal to exaggerated TSH response. ²

Proposed diagnostic criteria: †

TSH-oma – < two fold elevation in serum TSH

Thyroid hormone resistance – > four fold increase in serum TSH

NOTES:

Some protocols have used 400-500 µg of TRH in adults ³

† Absolute incremental criteria proposed include “absent response” TSH rise <2 mU/L or “reduced response” TSH rise <5 mU/L ³. Incremental TSH response to TRH may be normal in TSH-oma patients with prior thyroid ablation ³

8.2 T3 SUPPRESSION TEST

RATIONALE:

For investigation of suspected cases of resistance to thyroid hormone (RTH) linked to thyroid hormone receptor (THR) beta mutation. As per rationale in TRH stimulation test, analytical interference needs to be excluded first. T3 suppression test might be useful in cases where other available results are contradictory, for example a) TRH test is abnormal (TSH rise <2) and MRI pituitary is normal, b) TRH test is normal and MRI revealed pituitary adenoma (adenoma occurs in 20% of RTH), c) thyroidectomised or patients with thyroid ablation.⁴ However due to cardiac side effects from T3, obtaining thyroid function tests in first degree relatives and **genetic testing for a mutation in the thyroid hormone receptor gene (identified in around 90% of RTH cases) may be considered preferential to confirm the diagnosis where possible.**

PROCEDURE:

Time	Procedure	Comment
Baseline	TSH, FT4, FT3 (Cholesterol, CK, Ferritin, SHBG)	
Day 1 -3	Patient to take Tertroxin 30µg mane, 20µg nocte (total 50 µg daily)	
Day 4	TSH, FT4, FT3 (Cholesterol, CK, Ferritin, SHBG, CTX)	If TSH suppressed, TSH-oma excluded with high certainty, no need to proceed with test
Day 4-6	Patient to take Tertroxin 30µg mane, 20µg midi, 30µg nocte (total 80 µg daily)	
Day 7	TSH, FT4, FT3 (Cholesterol, CK, Ferritin, SHBG, CTX)	If TSH suppressed, TSH-oma excluded with high certainty, no need to proceed with test
Day 7-9	Patient to take Tertroxin 40 µg mane, 20 µg midi, 40 µg nocte (total 100 µg daily)	
Day 10	TSH, FT4, FT3 (Cholesterol, CK, Ferritin, SHBG, CTX)	

INTERPRETATION:

Patient with RTH typically display partial, dose dependant suppression of baseline TSH with exogenous T3. Failure to suppress TSH to any degree is suggestive of a TSHoma. Partial, dose dependant suppression of TSH with LT3 is consistent with RTH. With short term 100 ug LT3 daily >80% reduction in TSH from baseline suggests RTH while <40% suggests TSHoma.²

Additional analytes may be useful to assess the peripheral tissue effects of thyroid hormones. A normal response to administration of T3 is an increase in SHBG, ferritin and CTX and a decrease in cholesterol and CK. In patients with RTH these responses are reduced, or paradoxical.

CONTRAINDICATIONS:

T3 suppression test should not be performed in patients with severe pulmonary/ cardiovascular disease/ psychiatric illness/ potential to decompensate from a short period of hyperthyroidism.

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8.3 CALCIUM STIMULATION TEST FOR MEDULLARY THYROID CANCER

RATIONALE:

The test is used in patients with mildly raised basal calcitonin levels and remaining diagnostic uncertainty to distinguish medullary thyroid carcinoma (MTC) from C-cell hyperplasia (CCH) and from (for example in MEN-1 patients) co-existing calcitonin-producing neuroendocrine tumours (NET). C-cells (like parathyroid cells) express the Ca-sensing receptor and acute increases in ionized calcium will lead to a greater increase of calcitonin from MTC vs. CCH patients (1). In patients with NET or those who have elevated calcitonin due to interfering antibodies there will be limited calcitonin increase.

PREPARATION:

1. Patient fast overnight.
2. Check electrolytes and serum calcium at baseline.
3. i.v. Cannula, 18-20g.
4. Saline flush.
5. Calcium gluconate 10% (10 - 20 ml required = 93 to 186 mg of elemental calcium).

PROCEDURE:

1. Insert cannula and flush.
2. Take baseline sample for serum calcitonin and calcium.
3. Give elemental calcium 2.3 mg/kg (0.06 mmol/kg) body weight using 10% calcium gluconate at 10 ml per minute*. (4)
4. Flush cannula.
5. Take samples at 1, 2, 3, 5 and 10 and 15 minutes for calcitonin and calcium.
6. Send immediately on ice to the lab for centrifugation and freezing.

*70 kg patient should be infused with 161 mg or 4.2 mmol of elemental calcium. This amount corresponds to 18.4 ml of the 10% Ca gluconate solution

INTERPRETATION:

- In a study of healthy volunteers (95th percentile of basal calcitonin values 5.0 pg/ml in males and 5.7 pg/ml in females) 95th percentile maximally stimulated calcitonin values were 131 pg/ml in men and 90 pg/ml in women (2).
- In a study of >100 patients with MTC (n=42), RET gene mutation carriers (n=14), multinodular goitre (n=69) and healthy volunteers (n=16), basal calcitonin values >68 pg/ml in males and >18.7 pg/ml in females and stimulated calcitonin values >1,620 pg/ml in males and >184 pg/ml in females had the highest accuracy to distinguish MTC cases from CCH and normal (4).

NOTES:

Rapid calcium infusion can lead to vasodilatation and arrhythmias - cardiac arrest after iv calcium stimulation in a healthy young man without known cardiac disease has been reported (3). While larger case series have not reported serious adverse effects, use with caution and consider cardiac monitoring, and avoid in patients with significant cardiac disease.

More transient side effects lasting up to 15 minutes include flushing sensation/ feeling of warmth (98%), facial/ extremity paraesthesia, altered gustatory sensation (20%).

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9 Pheochromocytoma

9.1 CLONIDINE SUPPRESSION TEST

RATIONALE:

To exclude the diagnosis of pheochromocytoma / paraganglioma (PPGL) in patients with hypertension and borderline raised catecholamines or catecholamine metabolites. The test intends to discriminate patients with mildly elevated test results for plasma normetanephrine due to increased sympathetic activity from patients with elevated test results due to a PPGL. Alternate causes for elevated plasma metanephrines (e.g. medications, collection procedure) must be excluded prior to clonidine suppression test. The clonidine suppression test is only recommended in patients with equivocal biochemistry on initial testing and in situations where the diagnosis remains uncertain. Clonidine can cause hypotension and is contraindicated in frail patients with a history of hypotensive episodes/ severe coronary/ carotid disease.

PREPARATION:

1. Obtain the clonidine from pharmacy:
2. Clonidine hydrochloride 100 µg or 150 µg tablets for oral administration
3. Test Dose = 300 µg orally (4.3 µg / kg) (1, 2)
4. Stop sympatholytic medications (e.g. beta blockers) for at least 48 hours before the test.
5. No paracetamol, diuretics or tricyclics anti-depressants for 5 days. Medications including diuretics, tricyclic antidepressants and β-blockers are known to interfere with noradrenaline responses to the clonidine suppression test
6. No smoking or caffeine for 24h
7. Fast overnight.
8. Quiet environment.
9. Cancel test if baseline blood pressure is <110/60 mmHg or in volume-depleted patients. Profound hypotensive responses to clonidine can also occur in patients taking other antihypertensive medications.

PROCEDURE:

Time	Procedure	Comment
-30 minutes	Insert cannula	Patient to lie supine during the test where possible and must rest in the supine position rest for 30 minutes prior to baseline measures.
Baseline	Collect 2 samples for plasma metanephrines at 5 minutes apart. Record blood pressure and pulse.	Two baseline blood samples taken on ice.
0 minute	Give 300µg clonidine orally.	
+60 minutes	Record blood pressure and pulse.	
+120 minutes	Record blood pressure and pulse.	
+180 minutes	Collect blood for plasma metanephrines.	Blood needs to be taken ice.

Record blood pressure and pulse.

INTERPRETATION:

Normally, by activating α_2 -adrenoceptors in the brain and on sympathetic nerve endings, clonidine (an α_2 -adrenoceptors agonist) suppresses catecholamine release by sympathetic nerves in patients without PPGL. However, due to autonomous tumoral secretion of catecholamines, PPGL are not influenced by clonidine-induced suppression of the sympathetic nervous system (1).

An abnormal test result indicating a PPGL includes an elevation of plasma normetanephrine at 3 h after clonidine administration and a less than 40% decrease in levels compared with baseline (2). In this retrospective analysis (2) of 48 patients with and 49 patients without PPGL who underwent clonidine suppression testing, a positive result with normetanephrine (both elevated plasma concentration after clonidine and lack of suppression) had a sensitivity of 96% and a specificity of 100%. If there was either only an elevated plasma concentration after clonidine or a lack of suppression of normetanephrine, sensitivity remained 96% but specificity dropped to 67% to 96%. Noradrenaline response to clonidine suppression was less sensitive and specific (2).

NOTES:

Hypotension and sedation can occur with clonidine.

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Acknowledgements:

The working party acknowledge the following institutions for their generosity in sharing their departmental protocols to improve the harmonisation process.

Austin Hospital

Mater Children's Hospital

Monash Medical Centre

Pathology Queensland

PathWest

Prince of Wales Hospital

Royal Children Hospital

Royal Melbourne Hospital

Royal North Shore Hospital

St Vincent's Hospital (Sydney)

St Vincent's Hospital (Melbourne)

Westmead Hospital

Amendment history:

Version	Date	Author/s	Comments
1.0	2017	HEDT Working group	
1.5	9/2018	HEDT Working group	Open for comments on ESA and AACB website