

Low Dose ACTH Stimulation Test

Introduction

This is a screening test for adrenocortical insufficiency and is performed by checking the responsiveness of cortisol secretion after low dose intravenous adrenocorticotrophic hormone administration.

The Procedure

- During the test procedure, the patient will be given an intravenous injection of tetracosactide hexa-acetate / cortrosyn, with blood samples taken to measure the cortisol levels before and at 30 mins after the injection (some centers will check blood 20 mins after injection as well).
- Each blood sample requires about 3 ml of blood.
- The whole procedure takes about an hour to complete.

Risk and Complication

Hypersensitivity reactions to the agent used in the test, such as rash, skin itchiness, breathing difficulty etc may occur, but these reactions are rare.

Before the Procedure

- Stop taking any steroid, such as hydrocortisone and prednisolone, from the afternoon of the day before the test.
- No fasting is required.

After the Procedure

After finishing the procedure, nursing staff will check with the patient for any discomfort related to the examination and patient's vital signs, such as blood pressure, pulse and temperature if clinically indicated.

Follow Up

The patient can call the endocrine / diabetes center for enquiry if there is any query or discomfort in relation to the procedure shortly after discharge.

Remarks

This is general information only and the list of complications is not exhaustive. Other unforeseen complications may occasionally occur. In special patient groups, the actual risk may be different. For further information please contact your doctor.