



Adrenocorticotropin (ACTH) Stimulation Test for Cortisol

The doctor wants your child to have an adrenocorticotropin (ACTH) stimulation test. This test is being done to check how well the adrenal glands are making a hormone called cortisol. If the adrenal glands are not working right, they may make too little or too much cortisol. This could cause the child to have a hard time responding to body stress, such as infections, illness, trauma, surgery or other procedures.

Your child's doctor has explained the reason for the test to you. Call the doctor or the doctor's office if you have questions about the test.

What will happen

- The test will be done in the T4D Infusion Clinic on the 4th floor of the Tower Building at Nationwide Children's Hospital. Please take your child to the Crossroads Registration area on the 1st floor to register before coming to the clinic. For directions, see page 3.
- The nurse will start an intravenous (IV) line (Picture 1). The nurse can put numbing cream on your child's skin before starting the IV to decrease the pain.
- A sample of blood will be taken from the IV. The IV will be used to draw blood and give medicine.
- The nurse will give medicine called Cortrosyn, another name for ACTH. Cortrosyn makes the adrenal glands release cortisol.
- After the Cortrosyn is given, blood samples will be taken from the IV.
- Your child should not feel any discomfort when the blood samples are drawn, since they will be drawn from the existing IV.
- When the test is over, the IV needle will be taken out.



Picture 1 Having an ACTH stimulation test.

How to prepare

- Explain the test to your child in a way he or she will understand at a time you feel is best.
- Please let your child's doctor know if your child has received oral or inhaled steroids within the last 6 weeks. If so, this could affect the test results, so the test may need to be rescheduled.
- You do not need to do anything special to get ready for the test unless told to do so by the doctor. Be sure to tell the doctor if your child has any allergies.
- Your child should not have a fever or feel sick on the day of the test.
- If your child is an infant, bring formula and comfort toys.
- For an older child, feel free to bring books, toys, or games for your child during the test. We have a TV with a DVD player so feel free to bring a favorite movie.
- Your child should come to the infusion clinic dressed comfortably. If possible, have the child wear a short-sleeved shirt.
- The test could take up to 4 hours to complete.
- Parents should stay with their child during the test.
- Your child should not take any medicine before the test unless your doctor tells you the medicine may be given. You may bring the medicine with you to the test so it can be given when the test is finished.

Risks and possible problems

This is a simple and safe test. Problems are rare, but they can happen. Possibilities include:

- Bleeding at the spot where the IV was put in
- Bleeding or bruising under the skin
- Fainting or feeling lightheaded
- Infection
- Rarely, a flushing, warm feeling in the face and a metallic taste in the mouth when getting the medicine

After the test

- Your child can eat regular foods.
- Your child will be able to go back to normal activities after the test.
- It takes 1 to 2 weeks for the test results to come back. When the report is ready, your child's doctor will talk to you about the results and future plan.

Parent information for Crossroads Registration

- **Crossroads Registration** is on the main level near the Crossroads Welcome desk, between the Crossroads elevators and the Tower elevators. Follow the Blue Path to the Crossroads lobby where the Green Path meets the Blue Path.
- To get to the **Infusion Clinic**, take the Tower elevators (between Crossroads Registration and Urgent Care along the Blue Path). Go to level 4 and turn right into Suite D.

These three parking options are available

- Park in the **Hospital Garage on Children's Drive**. Enter the hospital, turn right and follow the Blue Path until it meets the Green Path at the Crossroads Registration Area.
- Park in the **Outpatient Care Garage on 18th Street**. Enter the hospital and follow the Blue Path until it meets the Green Path at the Crossroads Registration Area.
- Use the **valet parking on Children's Drive or 18th Street**. Enter the hospital and follow the Blue Path until it meets the Green Path at the Crossroads Registration Area.

If you have any questions, call the Department of Endocrinology at _____.