

# Anterior Pituitary Function Test (APFT)

Information for families

(One of a series of leaflets  
explaining the reason why your child needs  
special hormone tests and how they will be carried out)



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## What is the test for?

This test is done when there have been concerns about how your child's pituitary gland is working. The pituitary gland is the master gland in the brain and controls bodily functions like growth, sugar levels, heart rate, puberty and fertility.

## Who will do the test?

The test is carried out on the Children's Day Care Unit by a trained nurse.

## Do I need to do anything before the test?

Your child will not be able to eat or drink anything other than **PLAIN WATER** from 4.00 am on the morning of the test. If the hormone doctor has given you some Stilboestrol tablets to take, your child should take these each morning and evening for 2 days before the test. It is important to follow these instructions or your child's test may need to be delayed or cancelled.

## What happens during the test?

- On arrival at the Day Care Unit, local anaesthetic (magic) cream will be applied to the hands and inner elbows as we will need to insert a cannula (a very fine plastic tube that sits in the vein) to allow us to take several samples of blood
- When the cannula has been placed, a blood sample will be taken
- An injection of a hormone (glucagon) is then given (usually into the thigh muscle) which causes the blood sugar to drop slightly and stimulates the gland to make the pituitary hormones (sometimes, an alternative hormone stimulator is given. This is called Clonidine and is given in tablet form)

- Following this, blood samples are taken every 30 minutes for 3 hours in total
- Your child will also have their blood sugar levels checked every 30 minutes
- During the test your child will need to stay on the ward but will be fully awake and able to play / read / watch TV
- When all the samples have been taken, we will give your child some lunch and remove the cannula
- You will then be able to go home

### **Are there any side-effects?**

There is a possibility that your child's blood sugar will drop during this test but as they will be closely monitored throughout, this can be treated as necessary.

### **When will I get the results of the test?**

The results of the test will be discussed with you by the doctor, either by letter or in clinic. This may be several weeks later as the results will not be available for 1 month after the test. Please do not contact the secretary or Day Care Unit for the results as they are not allowed to give out this information. All urgent results will be communicated to you as soon as possible.

## Contact details:

Secretary to Consultants in Paediatric Endocrinology

Tel: **0113 392 3700**

Children's Day Care Unit

Tel: **0113 392 7449**

Children's Endocrine Nurse Specialists

Tel: **0113 392 2366**