

Desmopressin (DDAVP) Response Test

Information for patients



You have been given this leaflet because your doctor has recommended that you have a Desmopressin (DDAVP) response test. It explains what DDAVP is, how it works, and what to expect when having the test.

What is DDAVP?

DDAVP is a synthetic hormone which produces a temporary rise in the amount of clotting factor in your bloodstream. It helps your body to release its own stores of von Willebrand factor and factor VIII (clotting factor) and also improves platelet function.

DDAVP increases the amount of von Willebrand factor and factor VIII circulating in your blood stream for 12-24 hours. This means it can be used as a treatment before any dental, minor surgery or invasive procedures, to help you to stop bleeding excessively.

Why have I been recommended for this test?

The test may be carried out if:

- You have mild/moderate Haemophilia A
- You are a Haemophilia carrier with a low factor level
- You have a certain type of von Willebrands disease

Not everyone has the same response to DDAVP, therefore it is recommended to test an individual's response before using it pre-procedure. A number of blood tests are required in order to do this.

If you have a platelet function disorder we may recommend DDAVP as a treatment but we not usually carry out a trial test.

What will the test involve?

A nurse will do a blood test to check your factor levels before you are given DDAVP. Your blood pressure and heart rate will also be checked. You will then be given an injection of DDAVP under your skin in your upper arm. You may feel a slight stinging sensation as the medicine is injected.

A second blood test is taken one hour after the injection to monitor the initial effect of the DDAVP. We then need to take a third sample six hours after the injection was given. You may leave the hospital and return for this test or wait in the hospital if that is more convenient. The final blood test needs to be taken 24 hours after the injection was given, so you will be asked to return the following day for this.

Are there any side effects?

You may experience some side effects from DDAVP. Common side effects include:

- A feeling of warmth and flushing of your skin
- Red cheeks
- Watery or blood shot eyes

Less commonly patients may experience:

- Nausea
- Headaches
- Light-headedness
- Raised heart rate
- Decrease in blood pressure

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DDAVP can cause fluid to be retained by the body so adults should only drink when they feel thirsty and should drink no more than 1-1.5 litres of fluid during the 24 hours after the injection.

If you do not observe the recommended fluid restriction, adverse symptoms are more likely to occur and the side effects may be more serious.

When will I get my results?

Your results will be discussed with you at your next clinic appointment.

Are there any alternative treatments to DDAVP?

DDAVP is the main treatment offered. If you do not have a good response to it, the doctor will discuss possible other treatments with you.

Further advice

If you have any worries or questions about your test please contact the Haemophilia nurses at the Haemophilia Centre at St James's University Hospital.

Telephone: 0113 206 8321
(8:00am - 6:00pm, Monday to Friday)

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