

# Water Deprivation Test

**This leaflet explains what a water deprivation test is and what you can expect when you come to the hospital. If you have any further questions, please speak to a doctor or nurse caring for you.**

## What is a water deprivation test and why is it needed?

This test is to look at how well your child's pituitary gland and kidneys are working together to balance water effectively in the body.

The pituitary gland, at the base of the brain, releases a hormone called Anti-Diuretic Hormone (ADH) which acts on the kidneys to regulate how much water they reabsorb into the body and how much is passed out in urine. The purpose of the water deprivation test is to see how well these functions are working when your child is not drinking.

## How can I prepare for this test?

On the day of the test, you must bring a 24 hour recording of how much your child has drunk the day before. You may be asked to stop your child from drinking before the day of the test but this will be explained by your doctor. The test usually starts at 8.30am and lasts around seven hours. A small plastic tube called a cannula is inserted into a vein using a needle and is used to take blood samples for the duration of the test. A local anaesthetic cream may be used to numb the area of skin where it is inserted. If used, this needs to be applied 30-45 minutes before the insertion of the cannula.

## What happens during the test?

On the morning of the test a dry breakfast can be given such as toast or cereal without milk. Once the test has begun, every passing of urine from your child needs to be collected and sent to the laboratory for analysis. If your child wears nappies please save these for the endocrine nurse to weigh. Occasionally, a soft plastic tube called a catheter may be inserted into the bladder to facilitate collecting urine samples. If this is required, you will be informed by your doctor.

Blood samples will be taken from the cannula each time a urine sample is taken and two hourly otherwise. Your child will be weighed and have their heart rate and blood pressure checked every hour. It is vital that they are never left alone, including when they go to the toilet. You and the nursing staff will need to keep a very close eye to ensure your child doesn't drink anything once the test has begun. They may be irritable and upset during the test because they are not allowed to eat and drink as usual. There are play specialists and a play room on the ward to assist with distraction but it is recommended you bring along things to keep them busy.

At the end of the test some children require an injection of a medicine called Desmopressin. A light meal is given and small amounts to drink. This may require your child to be admitted for

longer but this can be discussed in more detail on the day. If this medication is not required, then your child will be given a good drink and a meal and can go home if well.

## Contact us

Please contact the paediatric endocrine clinical nurse specialist on either 0787 659 7062 or 0778 685 6764 (Monday to Friday 8.30am to 4.30pm) if you have any questions about this.

**For more information leaflets on conditions, procedures, treatments and services offered at our hospitals, please visit [www.stgeorges.nhs.uk](http://www.stgeorges.nhs.uk)**

## Additional services

### Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)

PALS can offer you advice and information when you have comments or concerns about our services or care. You can contact the PALS team on the advisory telephone line Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday from 2pm to 5pm.

A Walk-in service is available:

Monday, Tuesday and Thursday between 10am and 4pm  
Friday between 10am and 2pm.

Please contact PALS in advance to check if there are any changes to opening times.

The Walk-in and Advisory telephone services are closed on Wednesdays.

PALS is based within the hospital in the ground floor main corridor between Grosvenor and Lanesborough Wing.

**Tel:** 020 8725 2453 **Email:** [pals@stgeorges.nhs.uk](mailto:pals@stgeorges.nhs.uk)

### NHS Choices

NHS Choices provides online information and guidance on all aspects of health and healthcare, to help you make decisions about your health.

**Web:** [www.nhs.uk](http://www.nhs.uk)

### NHS 111

You can call 111 when you need medical help fast but it's not a 999 emergency. NHS 111 is available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. Calls are free from landlines and mobile phones.

**Tel:** 111

### AccessAble

You can download accessibility guides for all our services by searching 'St George's Hospital' on the AccessAble website ([www.accessable.co.uk](http://www.accessable.co.uk)).

The guides are designed to ensure everyone – including those with accessibility needs – can access our hospital and community sites with confidence.

