

WHAT CAN I EXPECT AFTER THE TEST?

There is no special care after the test. Your doctor will receive the results of the test within 7 to 10 days.

Based on the results of the test, we will tell you if your body can make enough cortisol. We will tell you if you need to make changes to some medications when you are sick. We will tell you if there are any other special precautions.

We will discuss the results of the test with you at the next clinic visit.

WHO CAN I TALK TO IF I HAVE QUESTIONS?

You can talk to your transplant doctor, nurse or pharmacist.

Transplant Clinic

604-875-2345 ext. 3613

THIS CONTENT IS REVIEWED PERIODICALLY AND IS SUBJECT TO CHANGE AS NEW HEALTH INFORMATION BECOMES AVAILABLE.

THE INFORMATION IS INTENDED TO INFORM AND EDUCATE AND IS NOT A REPLACEMENT FOR MEDICAL EVALUATION, ADVICE, DIAGNOSIS OR TREATMENT BY A HEALTHCARE PROFESSIONAL.

Morning Cortisol Test

For solid organ transplant recipients

INFORMATION FOR FAMILIES and CAREGIVERS

Your child will have a Morning Cortisol Test

on _____ @ 7:30 AM
(date)

At BCCH outpatient lab.

Take your last dose of prednisone

on _____ @ 8:00 AM
(date)

and bring your medications to the test to take afterward (including prednisone).



WHAT IS A MORNING CORTISOL TEST?

Your doctor has asked for a **Morning Cortisol test**. It is a blood test. It is a *screening test* to look at the effects of prednisone on your child's ability to make cortisol.

Children living with a solid organ transplant are treated with steroid medications like prednisone. Some children will always stay on a small dose of prednisone. This can make it hard for your body to make normal amounts of cortisol. In that case, the cortisol level will be low.

WHAT IS CORTISOL?

Cortisol is a hormone made by the adrenal gland. Cortisol has many jobs in the body. It helps keep blood sugar and blood pressure levels normal. It also helps the body respond to the stress of illnesses or injury. Some examples of body stress include having the flu or blood infection (illness), having surgery (injury) or being in an accident (injury).

If your body can't make enough cortisol when there is a body stress, it can be dangerous. It can cause low blood pressure, low blood sugar and makes it hard to fight off infection.

WHY DOES MY CHILD NEED THIS TEST?

Steroids can sometimes do the same job as cortisol. Using steroids can sometimes lower the amount of cortisol normally made by the adrenal gland. This is called adrenal suppression. Because your child has been taking prednisone for their transplant, this test is needed to check if they have *adrenal suppression*.

WHY IS THIS TEST IMPORTANT?

This test will see whether your child is able to make enough cortisol to stay healthy.

Morning cortisol is a screening test. If it shows a low cortisol level, then we will recommend another test to confirm. The confirmation test is called an **ACTH Stimulation Test**. We will tell you more about that if the morning cortisol is low.

HOW IS THE MORNING CORTISOL TEST DONE?

The simple blood test can be done with the rest of your child's routine bloodwork. As usual, you will have your blood test in the morning. There is no extra poke for this test.

HOW DO I PREPARE MY CHILD FOR A MORNING CORTISOL TEST?

Do not give the regular prednisone dose for 2 full days before the test. For example, if you are having your test on Monday, take prednisone on Friday and don't take it on Saturday or Sunday.

You will re-start the prednisone after the blood test.

WHAT ABOUT GIVING MEDICATIONS ON THE DAY OF THE TEST?

DO NOT GIVE your child their morning medications at home. BRING all of your child's medications with you on the day of the Morning Cortisol test.

WAIT until after the bloodwork is completed to give the morning dose of your child's medication. You can take them right after the test is finished.

Restart giving your prednisone on the same morning of the test – right after the blood test is finished.