

National Centre for Inherited Metabolic Disorders



Glucose and Lactate Profile

This leaflet will help to explain what to expect when your child attends Temple Street Children's University Hospital for a glucose and lactate profile.

What is a Glucose and Lactate Profile?

A Glucose and Lactate profile is part of a number of tests requested by your child's doctor in the Inherited Metabolic Disorders Unit. Glucose and lactate are fuels we need in our body to give us energy. Your child may have been sent to see the metabolic specialist for a number of different reasons and this is a test to look at the glucose and lactate levels over 24 hours. The test can show if your child is breaking down and absorbing food in a normal way. It is also a test performed regularly for children who have problems keeping their blood sugar (glucose) normal because they have been diagnosed with a disorder that affects their blood sugar levels.

What is involved in the test?

A date for the test will be arranged and will be sent to you by post. Your child will be admitted to hospital for 24 hours or longer if other tests have to be done. When you arrive you will meet your child's doctor who will explain the test and ask you to sign a consent form. It is important to tell the doctor all the medication your child maybe taking and any allergies he/she may have.

For 24 hours your child will have their glucose and lactate level checked. This involves pricking a finger and filling a little tube with blood which will be tested on the ward. Children under 1 year will have the blood sample taken from the side of the heel and children over 1 year from the sides of finger or toe. Sometimes the pricking of the finger is too stressful, which can affect the blood lactate result and so your child may have a cannula (straw) put into a vein. A cannula allows blood samples to be obtained more easily.

The levels are done before meals (including drinks) and an hour and a half after finishing meals (including drinks). Because of this it is important to tell the nurse caring for your child when they have finished eating their meal. In between meals your child will be allowed to drink plain water. Failure to follow this will affect the results of the test.

Your child will be allowed to have what they would normally eat or drink during the day and at night before they sleep. They will usually be allowed to drink water only during the night depending on their age. Small babies will be allowed to continue with their normal feeding routine. Your child's levels will be checked every 4 hours during the night.

Depending on what tests your child will be having the next morning they may have to fast from around 5 am, which means they can have their breakfast / bottle at this time.

What happens when the test is finished?

When your child is discharged home you will be given an appointment for the Outpatients Department.

It is always a good idea to write down any questions you may have so that you are clear about the testing.

If have any questions when you go home you can contact the Metabolic Outpatients Department to speak to a specialised doctor, nurses or dietitian

Monday – Friday 8.30am- 4.30pm
01 8784317/4646/4409

Author: Sarah Fox
Eilish O Connell
Catherine McDonnell Version: 1
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