

National Centre for Inherited Metabolic Disorders



Oral Glucose Load

What is an Oral Glucose Load?

An Oral Glucose Load is a test requested by your doctor to help diagnose certain metabolic conditions. The test is performed if your doctor thinks the energy producing structures of your child's cells (mitochondria) are not functioning properly. Glucose is a fuel needed by the mitochondria to make energy. If the mitochondria are not working properly, sometimes they will find it difficult to breakdown glucose. By giving a measured amount of glucose (sugar) drink the doctor can see how the body reacts to drinking glucose.

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 St. Brigid's Ward to have the test and may be admitted the night before, or the morning of the test. This depends on whether or not your child is for other tests during their admission. 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 they may have.

The test usually takes place in the morning. Your child must be fasting for four hours before the test takes place. Your child will have a cannula (straw) put into a vein which will allow blood samples to be taken easily.

What will happen during the test?

The nurse looking after your child will be taking the blood samples. The test will begin shortly after the cannula is inserted and last approximately an hour. Your child will then be given a measured amount of a glucose drink, which they will have to drink in 5 minutes (maximum 10 minutes). This may be lucozade, miwadi, ribena or 7up depending on your child's preference.

Some children may find it difficult to drink the amount measured. If this happens it is necessary to use a tube which is inserted in the nostril and passed into the stomach. Your nurse will be able to provide you with more information about this and discuss it further when you arrive. If a tube is used it will be removed by the nurse straight away once the glucose has been passed into the stomach. This will only be used if your child is unable to drink their sugary drink.

The nurse will also need to collect a urine sample from your child during or after the test.

It is very important that your child does not eat or drink 4 hours before or during the test. This may affect the result of the test. Once the test is over, as directed by your nurse, your child can eat and drink.

What happens when the test is finished?

After the test is finished your child's nurse will remove the cannula, unless your child is due to have other tests during their admission.

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
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