



Northumbria Healthcare
NHS Foundation Trust

Tilt Table Testing

Issued by Northumbria Falls and Syncope Service



Your appointment details:

Date:

Time:

Hospital:



Information about some of the tests you may require

Your doctor has requested that you have some special blood pressure tests. These tests will be carried out in the Tilt Room at either Wansbeck General Hospital or North Tyneside General Hospital depending on your locality.

How long will it take?

The whole range of tests takes about one hour.

Why is it done?

It provides your doctor with certain important information about factors which affect your blood pressure and which may be responsible for the symptoms you have been experiencing.

You may have one or all of these tests:

- Head up Tilt Test
- Carotid Sinus Massage
- Active Stand

Before you attend for your appointment

If you are unable to attend your appointment, please let us know, our contact numbers are at the back of this leaflet.

Please note it is important that you do not drive home from this clinic, and that you make other arrangements for your return journey.

Please do not drink tea or coffee on the morning of the appointment. But do drink other fluids that do not contain caffeine.

Please take your medications as usual on the day of your appointment.

How is it done?

Head up Tilt Test

This is to monitor what happens to your blood pressure when lying and standing.

You will lie on a special bed called a **Tilt Table**. This bed moves very slowly up and forwards until you are in an upright position. There is a foot rest to rest your feet on and a table to lean on whilst in this position.

You will stand like this for a period of time whilst we look at your blood pressure and heart rate using a machine called a **Taskforce Monitor**. This has a cuff which fits around your fingers and gives a continuous blood pressure reading. You will feel the cuff inflating and deflating during the test. You will also have leads attached to your chest to monitor the activity of your heart throughout the test.

Carotid Sinus Massage

This test involves the doctor rubbing each side of your neck for 10 seconds, first lying down, then standing up. This is to test a reflex called the “carotid sinus reflex”. By doing this test we are able to determine whether this reflex is over-sensitive, causing your blood pressure to drop, or your heart rate to slow down. This could account for the symptoms you have been experiencing.

There is a risk with carotid sinus massage of temporary weakness, loss of feeling or visual disturbance in around 1 in 1,000 patients; however this is rarely permanent and usually resolves within 24 hours.

This test is to help us identify the cause of your falls, because if you blackout at home you are at risk of injury.

Active Stand

This test is to determine if your blood pressure drops when you move from lying to standing. Unlike the Tilt Test, you have to do the work, hence the term “Active Stand”. After resting for a few minutes, we record your blood pressure lying down, then we ask you to stand for 3 minutes whilst we continue to monitor your blood pressure and heart rate.

Do I have to get undressed?

Not usually, but please try to wear loose clothing as we have to attach a cuff to your upper arm and it is helpful if you can avoid wearing long-line bras, slips and corsets etc., as we need to attach leads to your chest. All the equipment will remain in place during the investigation.

We get very accurate readings if your hands are warm, so in winter it is helpful if you can wear gloves to attend your appointment.

How do I get the results?

A report of the study will be sent to your referring doctor. If this is a consultant then he/she will write to your GP or discuss the results with you at an Outpatient clinic.

Transport

Should you require transport to be arranged, then please contact your GP surgery at least 3 days prior to the appointment date.

Do I need to bring anything with me?

Please bring an up to date list of your medications and doses. It is not necessary to bring a urine sample with you to this appointment.

Any other questions

If you have any other questions, fears or doubts, please do not hesitate to contact the specialist nurse in the tilt room - as we want you to feel as comfortable as possible.

Useful contact numbers

Tilt Room

Wansbeck General Hospital

Woodhorn Lane

Ashington

Northumberland NE63 9JJ

Direct Line: (01670) 529 176

Tilt Room

Jubilee Day Hospital

North Tyneside General Hospital

Rake Lane

North Shields

Tyne & Wear NE29 8NH

Direct Line: (0191) 293 4271

Alternative Formats

If you would like a copy of this information in large print, another language, audio tape or other format please call the Contact Centre on **03 44 811 8118**

Other sources of information

NHS 111

NHS Choices

www.nhs.uk/pages/homepage.aspx

NICE (National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence)

www.nice.org.uk

Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)

Freephone: **0800 032 0202**

Text: 01670 511098

Email: northoftynepals@nhct.nhs.uk

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General Enquiries **03 44 811 8111**

www.northumbria.nhs.uk

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