

What happens during a glucose tolerance test continued.....?

You will then be given a drink which contains a particular amount of sugar (in the form of glucose) and water. Timings may vary but another blood sample will be taken 1-2 hours after you have had the drink. treatment with medicines.

What should you do to prepare for a glucose tolerance test?

Your doctor should give you advice about what to do to prepare for a glucose tolerance test. This may include information about how long to fast for before having the test.

Are there any side-effects or complications from a glucose tolerance test?

There are usually no side-effects from a glucose tolerance test apart from a small bruise which may appear at the place where the needle was inserted.

Further help & Information

Diabetes UK

Telephone 0845 120 2960

[Www.diabetes.org.uk](http://www.diabetes.org.uk)



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What is a Glucose Tolerance Test?

A glucose tolerance test helps to diagnose Type 2 Diabetes or Impaired Glucose Tolerance (a condition that may lead to diabetes).

A glucose tolerance test checks how well the body processes glucose (sugar). It involves comparing the levels of glucose in the blood before and after drinking a sugary drink. The results of this test can help doctors to detect type 2 diabetes or impaired glucose tolerance.

Understanding blood glucose and insulin

After you eat, various foods are broken down in your gut into sugars. The main sugar is called glucose which passes through your gut wall into your bloodstream. However, to remain healthy, your blood glucose level should not go too high or too low.

So when your blood glucose level begins to rise (after you eat), the level of a hormone called insulin could also rise.

Insulin works on the cells of your body and makes them take in glucose from the bloodstream. This decreases the amount of glucose left in the blood. Some of the glucose is used by the cells for energy, and some is converted into glycogen or fat (which are stores of energy). When the blood glucose level begins to fall (between meals), the level of insulin falls. Some glycogen or fat is then converted back into glucose which is released from the cells into the blood stream.

Insulin is a hormone which is made in the pancreas. Hormones are chemicals that are released into the bloodstream and work on various parts of the body.

How does a glucose tolerance test work?

In most people a simple blood test is enough to detect diabetes. However, some people have 'borderline' results on routine blood tests and then a glucose tolerance test may help. Also this test can show when the body can't manage blood glucose levels well but not yet to the stage of diabetes.

This is known as impaired glucose tolerance.

Prior to a glucose tolerance test you are asked not to eat for a certain length of time before the test. Then you drink a sugary drink. Normally, the body should quickly move glucose from the blood into the body's cells. This would reduce the amount of glucose found in the blood samples taken. If there is a problem glucose will remain in the bloodstream. This shows as a higher level of glucose in the blood samples.

What happens during a glucose tolerance test?

For the days leading up to the test you should eat a normal diet without restricting what you eat. The night before the test your doctor may ask you to stop eating 8-12 hours before you are due to have the test. You will usually be allowed to drink water, but may be asked to avoid sugary drinks. On the morning of the test a sample of blood will be taken—this is known as a fasting sample—it provides a comparison for the other test results