

SPEG MCN is a network of health-care professionals in Scotland who have a particular interest in the care of children and young adults who have endocrine conditions.

Produced by SPEG Nurses' Sub-Group

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### **For more information, contact:**

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## **Arginine test**

**Information for patients, parents and carers**



We have arranged for your child to have a test to measure hormones made by the pituitary gland.

Growth hormone (GH) is one of the hormones produced from the pituitary gland that we will measure. It is only produced intermittently, mostly during the night, so a blood sample during the day on its own is not helpful. Hormone levels can be affected by exercise, stress, sleep and puberty.

How does the test work?

The test involves giving your child a medicine called arginine. This makes the body release GH.

This test can sometimes be combined with other tests so that we can measure several hormones at the same time.

What happens on the day of the test?

Please make sure that your child has **nothing to eat or drink from midnight the night before the test**. Eating and drinking will affect the test results. If your child has anything to eat or drink we will not do the test. **Your child will not be able to eat or drink during the test. We will give them a meal and drinks once the test is finished.**

To do the test, we will need to insert a small plastic tube (cannula) into a vein in your child’s arm or hand. We will offer some numbing cream (or an alternative) to make this more comfortable.

The cannula will stay in place for the whole of the test. This allows us to give the arginine and collect the blood samples throughout the test.

We will remove the cannula before your child goes home.

After the test

Following the test your child must have a meal or something to eat before leaving the hospital. We recommend a quiet day (no sporting activities). You should encourage your child to eat regularly for the rest of the day and have snacks between meals.

The results will not be available immediately, but we will discuss them with you at your next clinic appointment (if we have not already contacted you before then).

Possible side effects of the test

During the test your child should feel well, but may occasionally feel a little sick or hungry.

Who to contact

Please contact your local nurse or hospital doctor if you need more advice.

Doctor’s name.....

Contact number.....

Nurse’s name.....

Contact number.....