Mixed meal test for suspected reactive hypoglycaemia

Information for patients
Endocrinology

The pancreas is an organ in the body that regulates glucose (sugar). Insulin is normally produced in the pancreas and helps the cells absorb glucose from the blood. Normally glucose levels rise after a meal, but in reactive hypoglycaemia there is a delayed response, often up to 4 - 5 hours after a meal. Hypoglycaemia is a condition where the level of glucose in the blood drops to below a certain point, causing many symptoms to appear. These symptoms are usually relieved 10 - 15 minutes after eating something sweet. It is important that your symptoms are monitored and recorded in hospital under controlled conditions.

Symptoms of hypoglycaemia may include:

- Paleness
- Trembling
- Sweating
- Rapid heartbeat
- Hunger
- Agitation
- Aggression
- Loss of concentration
- Tiredness
- Blurred vision
- Fits

What will the test involve?

- You will need to come to the Endocrine Unit at the Royal Hallamshire Hospital for about 6 hours.
- You will be asked to drink water only from 12 midnight on the day of your test.
- You will need to arrive on the unit at 9.00am.
- A small hollow tube (cannula) will be placed into a vein in your arm from which all the blood samples can be taken.
- A blood sample is taken before you are given a specially prepared balanced meal. If you have any particular dietary requirements please inform us before.
- 30 minutes after the meal we will take a blood sample for glucose and insulin.
- We will take further blood samples for glucose and insulin every 30 minutes for up to 5 hours.
- At the end of the test you will be given a drink and some toast.
- The cannula is removed and a dry dressing applied, which can be removed once you get home.

How will I get my results?
The nurse looking after you will discuss with you how you will get to know the results.

What if I have any questions or concerns?
If you have any questions or concerns about the test please telephone the Endocrine Investigation Unit on 0114 271 3714.