



The Stim Test

A Guide for Parents About Stimulation Testing

Brought to you by





A note to parents or guardians

Your doctor has recommended a Stimulation (stim-yu-LAY-shun) Test, or “Stim” Test, for your child. The Stim Test will tell your doctor whether your child’s body is making enough growth hormone on its own. This booklet gives you some details on what the test will be like.

Your child’s test may not be exactly the same as what is described here. Your doctor or nurse can explain the differences.

About the Stim Test

Growth hormone is made by the pituitary (pi-TOO-it-er-ee) gland. It is usually released while we sleep or exercise. It doesn’t stay in our blood for very long. So, it is not easy to measure how much our bodies are making. The Stim Test makes this possible.

Your doctor may give your child one or more drugs. The drugs will cause—or “stimulate”—your child’s pituitary gland to release growth hormone. Then the amount of growth hormone released can be measured.

It generally takes about 1 to 2 weeks to get the results of your child’s Stim Test from your doctor or nurse. The results can tell your doctor whether your child needs treatment.

Preparing for your child's Stim Test

- **One or more drugs may be used during testing.** Your doctor will decide which are best for your child. Some are given as pills. Others are given by injection. Your child may be able to have the injection through an IV. An IV is a needle and special tube that is put into the arm or hand
- **Your doctor may give you a prescription for your child, which should be filled before the test.** Have it filled at least 1 day before, and bring it with your child to the test (NOTE: Check with your pharmacist or your hospital pharmacy at least a week before the test in case the drug needs to be ordered.)
- **Your doctor or nurse can tell you about any possible side effects.** Some of the drugs can make your child feel tired or weak. Or, they may make your child feel warm or sick to their stomach
- **Be sure to set aside enough time in your daily activities for your child's test.** The test may last a few hours. Ask your doctor or nurse how long the test will take, so you are prepared
- **Your child should not have anything to eat or drink for 10 to 12 hours before the test.** Water is usually okay, but check first with your doctor or nurse. If your child has diabetes or low blood sugar, ask for special instructions. Also check with your doctor about any medicines your child takes
- **Limit your child's physical activity for 10 to 12 hours before the test.** Exercise can affect the amount of growth hormone in your child's blood
- **Your child should wear loose, comfortable clothing for the test**

During your child's Stim Test

- **The first step for a Stim Test is usually putting in an IV.** With the IV, your doctor or nurse can take many blood samples with only 1 needle stick. This is more comfortable for your child
- **Blood samples will be taken at different times.** They will show how your child's body responds to the drug. Your child will be asked to keep still. The test should not be uncomfortable
- **Testing may take a few hours or longer.** The total time for the test will depend on which drugs are used and how many blood samples are taken
- **You may be able to stay with your child during the test.** If space allows, you will most likely be able to stay with your child. However, this will depend on where the test is done

After your child's Stim Test

- **After the Stim Test is finished, your child should eat a snack as soon as possible.** Ask your doctor or nurse. He or she may tell you to bring something to give your child quick energy, like a piece of fruit, fruit juice, or soda. You may also need to bring a snack with protein, like an energy bar, nuts, or peanut butter and crackers
- **Your child may feel tired and want to rest when the test is done.** Try not to make any plans for your child for the rest of the day
- **Your child's blood sample will be sent to a lab.** Usually you'll get the results within a few weeks

Do you have more questions?

You may have other questions for the doctor. Write them below, and bring this brochure with you when you take your child for the Stim Test.

To learn more about growth...

There's plenty of useful information out there about growth disorders. The following groups provide support and educational materials for families of children with growth problems. Visit their Web sites for more information.

Human Growth Foundation
www.hgfound.org
1-800-451-6434

The MAGIC Foundation
www.magicfoundation.org
1-800-3 MAGIC 3
(1-800-362-4423)

For further information about Growth Disorders
please visit www.healthygrowth.com

**To help you remember when
your child is having the Stim Test,
fill this in and keep it with you.**



Your child's Stim Test time

_____ at _____
date time

Place:

Amount of time needed for test:
