

Saline Infusion for Primary Hyperaldosteronism Test

What is a saline infusion for primary hyperaldosteronism test?

This test is frequently done for patients who have high blood pressure that has not responded appropriately to medication, and for those with low blood potassium levels.

It is being done because your previous blood work showed a high level of aldosterone. Aldosterone helps control blood pressure by holding onto salt and water. The increased salt and water increase your blood pressure. Aldosterone also helps eliminate potassium from the blood. Primary hyperaldosteronism is a disease in which the adrenal gland(s) make too much aldosterone, leading to high blood pressure and low blood potassium levels.

How is the test performed?

An appointment will be scheduled for you to have the test performed. You will be provided with the location and arrival time. Please plan for at least 5 hours of testing.

Upon arrival, your weight will be taken and you will recline in a lying position for 30 minutes prior to the start of your test.

An intravenous (IV) cannula will be inserted into a vein in one of your arms and will remain there for the duration of the test. All of your blood samples will be drawn through this catheter, so you will not require any further needle pokes.

Using an infusion pump, the IV fluid is delivered into a vein of your arm at a very fast rate for 4 hours. Your arm may feel cold. During the IV infusion, the nurse will check your blood pressure every 15 minutes and check you for any signs that you are not tolerating the large volume of fluid, such as swelling in your hands and feet, shortness of breath or cough.

Once the infusion is done, blood work will be drawn from the IV line. The IV will continue

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very slowly until it is determined you have been able to get rid of most of the fluid you have received.

You will be asked to empty your bladder and your weight will be rechecked. If you have any signs of retaining too much fluid, the doctor will assess you and may provide IV medication, furosemide (Lasix), to help you pass urine to eliminate the extra fluid. The physician will also advise you about what blood pressure pills and doses to take after the test is done.

Once the blood work is done, your blood pressure is stable and next steps have been discussed, the IV will be discontinued and you can go home.

Are there any risks or side effects to this test?

As with any blood test or IV insertion, you may have some bruising or redness at the site where the catheter was inserted. There is also a very small risk of infection.

How do I prepare for the test?

Your test will be booked to allow for about 4 weeks of preparation.

During this period, you will likely have your blood pressure medications changed and doses adjusted as many of blood pressure medications can affect the blood tests, which will impact results.

Your doctor will order blood tests to monitor potassium levels. You may also be started on a potassium supplement or have it increased as low blood potassium levels will also give invalid test results. You may also have heart tests done to ensure your heart is able to tolerate the volume of salty IV fluid given during this test.

You must not smoke from midnight the day before your scheduled test.

DO NOT STOP ANY MEDICATION UNLESS INDICATED BY HEALTH CARE PROVIDER

Bring your daily dose of medications to the appointment in case appointment takes longer than expected.

What should I do if I need to cancel?

If you need to cancel your appointment, please call 519-646-6000 ext. 64424 and state your name and test date. It's important to know that there may be a delay in rescheduling your appointment as the availability of test times are limited. If you need to cancel, we ask that you call as soon as possible.