

Fast (8 Hour) Test

What is a fast test?

This is a test to assess your low blood sugars levels (hypoglycemia) in an effort to determine the cause. Your physician has reviewed the circumstances around your low blood sugars and has ordered some specific tests to see if a low blood sugar can be reproduced in our clinic for further testing and diagnosis.

Hypoglycemia is a condition where blood sugar levels in the body are too low which can result in a variety of symptoms. This may include anxiety, sweating, hunger, headache and tingling or numbness of the skin.

How is the test performed?

You will fast (nothing to eat or drink) prior to the test. Your physician will determine the timing of the fasting based on your specific symptoms. You will be given an appointment and arrival time.

An intravenous cannula (IV) will be inserted into a vein in your arm. This allows your nurse to take blood samples directly from the IV without further use of needles. The first blood tests will be drawn at this time.

Your blood sugar will be checked on a regular basis as ordered by your doctor, using a glucometer. This will give an immediate reading for the nurse to determine how you are doing. As well, you will report any symptoms to the nurse throughout the test.

Your physician has determined how low your blood sugar levels need to drop for the test to be completed. When you reach that level, the nurse will draw more blood work to end the test. At this point, you will be given some juice to bring your blood sugar levels back up. You are encouraged to bring along a snack or small meal to help you recover from your low blood sugar, prior to going home.

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Once your blood sugar has recovered, your IV will be removed and you can go home. Please arrange to have a driver available to pick you up. The length of time of the test depends on your body's response to the fast. However, if you have not had a low blood sugar by 4:00 pm, blood work will be drawn and the test will end.

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.

You may feel light-headed, nauseated and sweaty as your blood sugar gets very low.

How do I prepare for the test?

You will need to fast (no food or drinks, except water) the night before your test. Do not smoke, chew gum, or exercise. These activities may stimulate the digestive system and alter test results. It is important for you to drink water the morning of the test. Specific directions will be provided to you. Please bring a snack to eat once the test is completed to help bring your blood sugars back up, you may resume your normal diet.

Do not stop any medication unless indicated by a healthcare provider. Bring your daily dose of medications to the appointment in case the appointment takes longer.

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.