

Patienteninformation

Glucose Tolerance Test

What is a glucose tolerance test?

A glucose tolerance test is used to diagnose gestational diabetes and type 2 diabetes.

There are two versions of the oral glucose tolerance test: the one-hour-test and the two-hours-test.

In the eight hours leading up to the test, you should not eat food or drink any beverages aside from water.

A glucose tolerance test measures how well your body's cells are able to absorb glucose, or sugar, after you ingest a given amount of sugar.

Type 1 diabetes usually develops quickly and involves high blood sugar levels. A glucose tolerance test is generally not needed.

Type 2 diabetes, on the other hand, often develops slowly over years. Type 2 diabetes is the most common form of diabetes, and it usually develops during adulthood.

Gestational diabetes occurs when a pregnant woman who doesn't have diabetes before pregnancy has high blood sugar levels as a result of the pregnancy.

Who needs a glucose tolerance test?

Doctors should screen all women for gestational diabetes. Gestational diabetes can cause pregnancy complications, so early detection and prompt treatment are important. If you're pregnant, your doctor will usually recommend this test between the 24th and 28th week of your pregnancy. Your doctor may also recommend that you have this test earlier if you're having thy symptoms of prediabetes or diabetes.

Preparing for a glucose tolerance test

Preparing for the glucose tolerance test involves the following:

- Continue to eat normal diet in the days leading up to the test.
- Consult with your doctor about any medications you're currently taking. Some medications, such as corticosteroids, beta-blockers, diuretics, and antidepressants, can interfere with the results.
- Abstain from food for at least eight hours before the scheduled test. You may drink water, but avoid other beverages, including coffee and caffeinated tea, as these can interfere with the results.
- Bring something to read or an activity to keep you busy while you wait.
- In case of any infection (common cold, urinary infection) or if you cannot sleep in the night before the test is useless. Please inform the doctor.

During the test

The test can take place in your doctor's office or a local lab. When you arrive, a technician will take a blood sample to measure your baseline glucose level. This part of the test is also called a fasting glucose test.

The test will vary depending on whether you're being tested for diabetes or gestational diabetes.

Gestational diabetes testing

Your doctor may use two tests to help them determine if you have gestational diabetes: 1. the one-hour-test and 2. the two-hours-test.

1. After drawing a fasting glucose, you'll drink a solution with 50 grams of sugar. An hour later, you'll give a blood sample. A lab technician will use this sample to measure your blood sugar level.

2. The two-hours-test is generally only conducted if the one-hour-test has a positive result. A healthcare provider will ask you to consume a syrupy glucose solution that contains 75 grams of sugar. They'll draw your blood when you're fasting and at the one- and two-hour marks after you've drunk the glucose solution.

By taking several samples of your blood as your body processes the sugary drink, your doctor will be able to tell how well your body can handle a sugar challenge.

Risk of a glucose tolerance test

These tests have no serious risks. If they're testing you for gestational diabetes, this test has no associated serious risks for you or your baby. Breaking the skin barrier can slightly increase your risk of infection. Watch for signs of infection, such as redness and swelling around the puncture site, and fever. You may also feel faint or dizzy from not eating. It's a good idea to eat after the test.

Some people find the glucose drinks difficult to tolerate, especially those with higher levels of sugar. You may experience:

- nausea
- stomach discomfort
- diarrhea
- constipation

Please don't hesitate to contact us if you have any questions.