

INFORMATION FOR PATIENTS

Thyroxine absorption test

The thyroid gland is responsible for making 2 hormones thyroxine (T4) and triiodothyronine (T3). These hormones are secreted in to the bloodstream to enable our bodies to function correctly. If your thyroid gland does not produce enough T4 or T3 then your doctor will recommend starting you on a medication called levothyroxine.

Despite this some patients will continue to have problems with their T3 or T4 levels, one of the reasons for this could be that the medication is not being absorbed in to the blood stream correctly.

Your doctor has recommended that you have a thyroxine absorption test to check how well your body is absorbing the medication.

What does the test involve?

You will be required to attend clinic 5 at King's Mill Hospital for 5 appointments at weekly intervals.

During this time you will be observed taking a larger dose of thyroxine than normal; this will be followed by a series of blood tests to enable the levels of T3 and T4 to be monitored.

It is important that during this test you only take the levothyroxine tablets given to you by the nurse at the hospital.

Week 1 will require a 5 hour stay in the outpatient department, all following weeks will be approximately 15-30 minutes.

Week 1:

- You will attend clinic 5 in the main outpatients department at King's Mill Hospital. On the morning of your test, the nurse will explain the procedure and answer any questions you have.
- A blood sample will be obtained at the beginning of the test to measure levels of T3 and T4 in your bloodstream before the medication is given to you.
- The nurse will then administer a dose of thyroxine.
- Further blood samples will be taken every 30 minutes for 2 hours then hourly for 2 hours.

Weeks 2 - 4:

- You will be required to attend the outpatient clinic for a blood test.
- After the blood test the nurse will administer your thyroxine dose.

Week 5:

- On the final week you will attend clinic for blood test as done previously.
- After this blood test you can recommence your normal dose of thyroxine.

Your doctor will contact you with the results of the test and commence any further treatment if necessary.

Contact details

If you have any questions or concerns please contact the department. We are open Monday to Friday between 9am and 5.30pm:

- **Clinic 5** – 01623 622515, extension 6578.
- **Patient pathway coordinator** – 01623 622515, extension 6586.

Further sources of information

NHS Choices: www.nhs.uk/conditions

Our website: www.sfh-tr.nhs.uk

Patient Experience Team (PET)

PET is available to help with any of your compliments, concerns or complaints, and will ensure a prompt and efficient service.

King's Mill Hospital: 01623 672222

Newark Hospital: 01636 685692

Email: sfh-tr.PET@nhs.net

If you would like this information in an alternative format, for example large print or easy read, or if you need help with communicating with us, for example because you use British Sign Language, please let us know. You can call the Patient Experience Team on 01623 672222 or email sfh-tr.PET@nhs.net.

This document is intended for information purposes only and should not replace advice that your relevant health professional would give you.

External websites may be referred to in specific cases. Any external websites are provided for your information and convenience. We cannot accept responsibility for the information found on them.

If you require a full list of references for this leaflet, please email sfh-tr.patientinformation@nhs.net or telephone 01623 622515, extension 6927.

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