



University  
Hospitals Sussex  
NHS Foundation Trust

# Tilt table test

Cardiac

Patient information

## **What is this information about?**

This information is about a test called a tilt table test. It explains what it is, why it is needed, and what happens during the test. It also explains how to prepare for the test, and how you will get the results.

## **Why have I been given this information?**

You have been referred for this test by your doctor, and there are some things that you need to do to prepare. This information will help you to understand what to expect, and how to get ready for the test.

## **What is a tilt table test?**

A tilt table test is a test used to help identify symptoms to do with blood pressure and heart rhythm irregularities (this is when there is something not right with your heart's rhythm).

## **Why might I need a tilt table test?**

This test helps your doctor understand how your blood pressure and heart rhythm respond to changes in position, such as moving from lying down to standing up.

It is often used to diagnose the cause of unexplained fainting (also called syncope), dizziness, or light headedness.

## **How long does the test take?**

The test can take up to one hour.

## What does a tilt table test involve?

1. You will be asked to lie down on a special bed called a tilt table. You will be securely and safely fastened to this table.
2. A small finger cuff will be attached to your finger to monitor your blood pressure on every heartbeat. This will feel like a constant squeezing of your finger but is not painful.
3. You will have a blood pressure cuff attached around your arm.
4. Electrodes (stickers) will be attached to your chest to record your ECG (heart rate and rhythm).
5. You will be asked to lie still and quiet (talking can disturb the information being recorded).
6. Recordings of your blood pressure and heart rhythm will be taken while you are lying down.
7. The table will then move slowly up and forwards until you are in an almost upright position.
8. Your blood pressure and heart rhythm will be continuously monitored and recorded for up to 45 minutes.
9. When the test is finished, the table will be lowered back to a lying position.

### Be aware

**The test can be stopped at any point if you feel unwell and want to stop.** There will be a member of staff with you at all times.

Sometimes, your doctor may want you to have some extra tests during the tilt table test:

- You may be given a special spray under your tongue. This spray is called Glyceryl Trinitrate or GTN. It dilates (makes bigger) your blood vessels.
- You may be given a carotid sinus massage or CSM. The carotid sinus is a blood vessel at the side of your neck.

## Do I need to make any preparations?

Yes, there are a few preparations you should make for a tilt table test.

- Avoid eating or drinking caffeinated beverages for at least four hours before the test. If you are diabetic, you may have a light meal.
- Bring a list of any medications you are currently taking.
- Wear loose, comfortable clothes, which will allow access to attach an ECG to your chest.
- If your symptoms make you feel unwell or drowsy for a long time, it is a good idea to bring someone with you.

## What happens after the test?

A detailed report will be made about the results of the test, and the final results will be shared with the doctor who referred you for the test.

## When will I receive the results?

The report will be sent to the doctor who referred you for the test. They will contact you to discuss the results.

If you have any enquiries about your results, please contact the department where the referral was originally made.

## Who can I contact for further information and advice about my appointment?

Please contact the booking team on: **01273696955 Ext. 63619.**

This information is intended for patients receiving care in Brighton & Hove or Haywards Heath.

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