

Patient Information - Hearing and Balance Clinic

Department of Audiology

Introduction

You have been referred to us by your consultant for a series of specialised hearing and balance investigations. These will be done during the balance clinic outpatient appointment that you have been sent. These tests may take a few hours, but hopefully will allow us to complete our investigations in one hospital visit.

Tests

One of the tests we will undertake is called '**The Caloric Test**' which is a test of your balance system. We will place goggles on your eyes to record your eye movements. The test is performed in the dark and you will be required to lie on your back for over half an hour. If you have any concerns with this, please let us know in advance.

During the test, warm water is flowed into each ear to determine the reaction of your balance system. This is then repeated with cold water. We monitor the response of your system by observing your eye movements. This test gives us invaluable information on the balance mechanisms in both of your ears.

Some people may feel dizzy or queasy during the test and at the end of the session, so it is advisable to have someone accompany you to your appointment and drive you home after the investigations.

Before your appointment

- Please visit your GP prior to your appointment at the balance clinic to check that your ears are **clear of wax**. If not, the wax may stop us from carrying out some of the tests.
- If you have been prescribed any of the drugs listed below, you are advised to **stop taking them for 48 hours before** your appointment as they will interfere with the test and may give false results:
 - **Stugeron** - also known as Cinnarizine
 - **Stemetil** - also known as Prochlorperazine or Buccastem
 - **Serc** - also known as Betahistine

Please contact your GP if you are in any doubt about stopping your balance medication.

You should **NOT** stop taking any other medication and, if you are in any doubt about what tablets you should take or stop, please consult your own doctor for advice.

- We ask you **not to drink any alcohol in the 24 hours prior** to your appointment.
- Please have only a **light** breakfast (or lunch) **up to three hours before** your appointment.
- You will need to **remove any eye make-up** (eyeliner and/or mascara) before your visit.

If you have any queries or concerns, please contact our department on the telephone number shown below or speak to your GP.

Thank you for taking the time to read this information. We look forward to seeing you at your appointment.

Contact details:

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Date of publication: September 2016
Author: F. Siyavudeen
Version: 2 (July 2020)
Review Date: July 2023
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