

Sweat Chloride Test

Your doctor has requested a sweat test for your child. This handout will explain how to prepare your child for the test, how the test works and when you will get the results.

Your child is getting a sweat chloride test in the lab. It will take about 1 hour. This test measures the amount of chloride in your child's sweat. The test is done to help find out one possible cause of lung infections and failure to gain weight in children.

How do I prepare my child?

- Have your child drink plenty of fluids the day before the test.
- Dress your child in a short-sleeved shirt or one with easy-to-roll-up sleeves. Bring a long-sleeved shirt or jacket in case they get chilled during the test.

The test may need to be rescheduled if:

- Your child has a fever the day of the test
- Your child has been on oral or IV steroids within the last two weeks

Call 206-987-3860 to reschedule the test.

What happens during the sweat chloride test?

The test involves putting two small gel pads on your child's forearms or thighs. The gel pads are attached to a small device that puts out a very low electrical current for 5 minutes. The current causes the skin under the gel pads to sweat. The current may prickle a little and the area may be red for a few hours after the test. Very rarely, a small burn may result.



Stimulating sweat glands

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To Learn More

- Call your child's healthcare provider for the results.
- www.seattlechildrens.org

Free Interpreter Services

- In the hospital, ask your child's nurse.
- From outside the hospital, call the toll-free Family Interpreting Line 1-866-583-1527. Tell the interpreter the name or extension you need.
- For Deaf and hard of hearing callers 206-987-2280 (TTY)

After the gel pads are removed, the area is covered with a collector, a small round watch-like device that will collect the sweat. The collector is left in place for up to 30 minutes. If you leave the waiting area, please be back on time. The test may not be valid if you return late.



Collecting sweat

The collector is then removed and the collected sweat is checked for chloride. There may be a temporary small spot of blue dye left on the skin where the collector was removed.

Often very young babies do not sweat as much as older children. Sometimes the test must be done again if we did not collect enough sweat.

If a high level of chloride is found, your child's doctor may ask that your child have another test.

The technologist doing the test will gladly explain the steps of the test, but to find out more about the sweat chloride test, please contact your child's healthcare provider.

When will I get the results?

Call your child's doctor to get the results of this test. The lab does not give out results to families because the information is best talked over with your child's doctor.

The lab will have the results available after 4 p.m. on the day of the test. Your child's doctor may call the lab after that time. The lab will mail the results to your doctor the morning after the test.

Seattle Children's offers interpreter services for Deaf, hard of hearing or non-English speaking patients, family members and legal representatives free of charge. Seattle Children's will make this information available in alternate formats upon request. Call the Family Resource Center at 206-987-2201.

This handout has been reviewed by clinical staff at Seattle Children's. However, your child's needs are unique. Before you act or rely upon this information, please talk with your child's healthcare provider.

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