

# Sweat Chloride Test

How to prepare your child for the sweat chloride 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 a 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 cold 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?

1. We will put two small gel pads on your child's forearms or thighs.
2. The gel pads are then 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. In very rare cases, 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](http://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.

3. After the gel pads are removed, the area is covered with a collector. This is a small round watch-like device that will collect the sweat. It 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

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

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 explain the steps of the test, but to find out more about the test, 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 and they will be faxed to your child's ordering provider at that time.

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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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