

# Head-Up Tilt Test

Cardiac Investigations

The prevention of infection is a major priority in all healthcare and everyone has a part to play.

- Please decontaminate your hands frequently for 20 seconds using soap and water or alcohol gel if available
- If you have symptoms of diarrhoea and/or vomiting, cough or other respiratory symptoms, a temperature or any loss of taste or smell please do not visit the hospital or any other care facility and seek advice from 111
- Keep the environment clean and tidy
- Let's work together to keep infections out of our hospitals and care homes.



# What is a Head-Up Tilt Test?

A Head-Up Tilt Test is used to investigate unexplained fainting (blackouts), dizziness, or episodes of feeling light-headed.

The test helps doctors understand how your blood pressure and heart rate respond when you move from lying down to an upright position.

# Why have I been referred for this test?

You may have been referred if you have:

- Recurrent fainting (syncope)
- Unexplained dizziness
- Blackouts
- Suspected reflex syncope (vasovagal episodes)
- Suspected Postural orthostatic Tachycardia Syndrome (PoTS)

The test helps identify whether your symptoms are related to changes in blood pressure or heart rhythm.

# What is PoTS?

PoTS is a condition that affects the autonomic nervous system (the system that controls automatic body functions such as heart rate and blood pressure).

## **In people with PoTS:**

- The heart rate increases abnormally when standing up
- Blood pressure may stay normal or drop slightly
- Symptoms improve when lying down

## **Common symptoms include:**

- Fast heart rate (palpitations)
- Dizziness or light-headedness
- Fatigue
- Brain fog (difficulty concentrating)
- Nausea
- Shakiness

## Are there any risks?

The test is generally very safe.

### **Possible side effects include:**

- Fainting
- Nausea
- Temporary low blood pressure
- Rarely, prolonged low blood pressure requiring brief treatment

You are monitored at all times by trained healthcare professionals.

## How should I prepare?

- Do not eat for four hours before the test (you may drink small amounts of water unless told otherwise)
- Continue your medications unless you have been advised to stop specific ones
- Avoid caffeine on the day of the test unless advised otherwise
- Wear comfortable clothing
- Arrange for someone to take you home, especially if you have a history of fainting

If you are pregnant or think you may be pregnant, please inform the department before the test.

## How does the test work?

1. You will lie flat on a special tilt table
2. Sticky pads (ECG electrodes) will be placed on your chest to monitor your heart rhythm
3. A blood pressure monitor will measure your blood pressure continuously
4. The table will then tilt to an upright position (usually around 60–70 degrees)
5. You will remain in this position for up to 45 minutes while your heart rate and blood pressure are monitored

## What will I feel during the test?

**You may:**

- Feel dizzy or light-headed
- Feel warm or nauseated
- Experience palpitations
- Feel shaky
- Faint (this is sometimes necessary to make a diagnosis)

If you faint, the table will be returned to a flat position immediately, and you will recover quickly. Staff will be with you throughout the test.

## How long will it take?

The appointment usually lasts 60–90 minutes, including preparation and recovery time.

## What happens after the test?

- You may feel tired afterwards
- You should not drive immediately if you feel unwell
- A report will be sent to your referring doctor

## Contact details

If you have any questions, please contact the Cardiac Investigations Department.

Address:

Cardiac Investigations Department (B4)  
New Cross Hospital

Telephone: 01902 694220

Opening Hours: Monday – Friday 08:00-17:00





## English

If you need information in another way like easy read or a different language please let us know.

If you need an interpreter or assistance please let us know.

## Lithuanian

Jeigu norėtumėte, kad informacija jums būtų pateikta kitu būdu, pavyzdžiui, supaprastinta forma ar kita kalba, prašome mums apie tai pranešti.

Jeigu jums reikia vertėjo ar kitos pagalbos, prašome mums apie tai pranešti.

## Polish

Jeżeli chcieliby Państwo otrzymać te informacje w innej postaci, na przykład w wersji łatwej do czytania lub w innym języku, prosimy powiedzieć nam o tym.

Prosimy poinformować nas również, jeżeli potrzebowałiby Państwo usługi tłumaczenia ustnego lub innej pomocy.

## Punjabi

ਜੇ ਤੁਹਾਨੂੰ ਇਹ ਜਾਣਕਾਰੀ ਕਿਸੇ ਹੋਰ ਰੂਪ ਵਿਚ, ਜਿਵੇਂ ਪੜ੍ਹਨ ਵਿਚ ਆਸਾਨ ਰੂਪ ਜਾਂ ਕਿਸੇ ਦੂਜੀ ਭਾਸ਼ਾ ਵਿਚ, ਚਾਹੀਦੀ ਹੈ ਤਾਂ ਕਿਰਪਾ ਕਰਕੇ ਸਾਨੂੰ ਦੱਸੋ।

ਜੇ ਤੁਹਾਨੂੰ ਦੁਭਾਸ਼ੀਏ ਦੀ ਜਾਂ ਸਹਾਇਤਾ ਦੀ ਲੋੜ ਹੈ ਤਾਂ ਕਿਰਪਾ ਕਰਕੇ ਸਾਨੂੰ ਦੱਸੋ।

## Romanian

Dacă aveți nevoie de informații în alt format, ca de exemplu caractere ușor de citit sau altă limbă, vă rugăm să ne informați.

Dacă aveți nevoie de un interpret sau de asistență, vă rugăm să ne informați.

## Traditional Chinese

如果您需要以其他方式了解信息，如易读或其他语种，请告诉我们。

如果您需要口译人员或帮助，请告诉我们。