

Glucose tolerance test

Why has your midwife or doctor recommended a glucose tolerance test (GTT)?

Your midwife may have recommended a GTT for a number of reasons, including:

- Previous large baby weighing 4.5 kg or more
- History of diabetes in your immediate family, i.e. your mother, father or siblings
- If you are overweight and have a body mass index (BMI) of 30 or above
- Previous gestational diabetes (a GTT recommended at 16 to 18 and 26 to 28 weeks)
- Confirmed polycystic ovary disease
- Ethnic origin (Black Caribbean, South Asian and Middle Eastern)
- Glucose 1+ on two or more occasions or 2+ on one occasion, if tested during your antenatal appointment.

What is the test for?

It is a screening test for diabetes in pregnancy (gestational diabetes). This is usually carried out between 26 and 28 weeks in your pregnancy. Sometimes this is also recommended earlier in your pregnancy.

What is gestational diabetes?

Gestational diabetes is a type of diabetes that starts during pregnancy. If you have gestational diabetes it will mean that your body is not able to make enough insulin (a hormone that controls your sugar levels) because of the changes caused by your pregnancy. This causes the levels of sugar in your blood to become higher than normal. Gestational diabetes affects around 2 to 4% of pregnant women.

How is the GTT done?

The GTT test is commonly done at the Medical Practice. It may also be offered at the John Radcliffe Hospital.

Please make sure you have a good evening meal the night before your test, including rice, pasta, potato or bread. The test is usually done in the morning and you **must not eat anything from midnight before your test**. You may drink water freely.

Smoking can also change the result. **Do not smoke** after midnight and until the test is completely finished. Do not take any indigestion remedies, vitamins or chewing gum. You can take essential medication such as thyroxine and blood pressure tablets as usual. We will take a blood sample and then give you a sugary drink plus a further quantity of water.

Please drink both of these slowly over five minutes. They are both measured amounts so you will need to drink it all. After one hour we will take another blood sample and then after another hour one more blood sample; Three in total.

Between blood tests we recommend that you stay at the practice as you are required to rest. All blood samples will be sent for analysis to see how your body deals with the sugar.

Can I eat and drink during the test?

You can drink water, but you cannot eat anything until after the third blood sample has been taken. You may wish to bring something to eat for after the test.

When will I get the results of my GTT?

The midwife team will contact you if the test shows you have gestational diabetes, usually within a week.