



Tilt Table Test

The tilt table test can help determine how your body responds to changes in position and susceptibility to syncope or "common faint." Syncope results when the brain does not receive sufficient blood flow and oxygen, the most common type of syncope is termed vasovagal syncope.

The tilt table test is designed to induce syncope under controlled conditions and is especially useful for diagnosing vasovagal syncope or underlying heart disease such as arrhythmias (abnormal heart rhythms) or severely narrowed heart valves.

Before the test

You will be instructed not to eat or drink anything approximately 5-6 hours before your test, this prevents nausea which may accompany the test.

Make arrangements for someone to drive you home safely after the test.

Check with your doctor on whether to stop certain medications to enable a more accurate test.

Bring a list of all medications.

Informed Consent

It is a requirement by law that we receive your consent prior to performing your test. It is important that you understand what the test is about, how it is done and what the risks are. If you have any questions please feel free to ask either the technician or the testing doctor who will be with you when you sign the form.

How is the test done

The test is performed by a doctor and a cardiac technician, who will monitor your blood pressure, heart rate and rhythm. Small sticky pads called electrodes are stuck to your skin to detect the ECG. To do this the chest will need to be exposed. Ladies will be given a gown.

The electrodes need to have good contact with your skin to pick up the electrical impulses from your heart. Men with hairy chests will be shaved in spots for the electrodes to be placed. The technician will give your skin a little scrub with rough paper and then a wipe with alcohol. This removes the dead skin cells which form a barrier. You will find that this may sting a little and it will leave red patches on your skin. This is normal and will take a couple of days to go away. Some patients with extra sensitive skin may develop small blisters from the gel used on the electrodes. This is rare and will heal quickly.

You will be instructed to lay down on a special tilt table by the technician. The ECG electrodes will be placed on your skin to monitor your heart rhythm and a blood pressure cuff will also be placed on your left arm to monitor your blood pressure. Safety straps are applied across your chest and legs.



Initially you will lie flat on the table then the entire table is tilted so that your head is almost upright (70 degrees) you will be continuously monitored in the tilted position for approximately 40 minutes. Your blood pressure will be monitored every 3 minutes and after 20 minutes, if no fainting symptoms or syncope occurs, the doctor will administer nitrolingual spray under your tongue.

This spray is administered to induce a fainting event and may give you a slight headache and/or dizziness after a few minutes.

At any time during the test you may get symptoms that you previously experienced when you fainted, if this occurs it is very important to notify the doctor or technician. If you experience symptoms and have considerable changes in blood pressure and heart rate, the table will be lowered to the flat position and the test stopped.

Is the test safe?

Tilt table test are generally safe. The test is designed to mimic a fainting spell therefore it may cause you to feel faint for a few moments. Should this happen, the table is lowered quickly and highly trained staff are able to handle any emergencies that may arise.

How do I get my results?

A report will be sent to your referring doctor, usually within 24 hours. Your doctor will discuss your results at your next appointment.