

Information for patients attending for overnight pulse oximetry

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We would like to invite you to attend an appointment to collect an overnight pulse oximetry device that you will take home with you and wear during sleep. This information sheet will explain what an overnight pulse oximetry test involves and answer some questions you may have. It also explains why this test is necessary and how you will be informed of the results.

What is an overnight pulse oximetry test?

This involves taking a small portable piece of equipment which looks like a wrist watch, to your own home to wear whilst you sleep. This will record your heart rate and the level of oxygen within your blood during sleep. You will be asked to wear this for one or two nights.

How does the test work?

- The device should be worn like a wrist watch but this has a non-invasive finger probe attachment for your thumb or finger.
- It will shine a light source through the finger to determine the oxygen levels in your blood.
- The device should only be worn during sleep.
- We will provide you with a sleep diary to document hours of sleep and awakenings during the night with some additional questions about the quality of your sleep and any symptoms you may have.

More detailed step by step instructions will be given at your appointment.

Why do I need an overnight pulse oximetry test?

The consultant has requested this test to assess how your breathing is during sleep as you may be experiencing symptoms such as excessive sleepiness, snoring or disturbed sleep. These symptoms may be due to sleep disordered breathing such as sleep apnoea and this test can help assess whether your oxygen levels drop during sleep as a result of this. Treating this helps improve overall health, quality of sleep and daily functioning.

What are the risks?

There are no known risks or pain associated with this test but it may cause slight discomfort by wearing the device during sleep.

How can I prepare for the test?

Please continue to take your regular medications and undertake your usual night time routine when wearing the device.

What happens with the results?

We will usually ask you to return the device to us the next working day or as soon as possible. You may also be given an appointment to do so. More information about how and when to return the device will be given during your initial appointment. After the device is returned, the results will be downloaded and a report will be written and sent to the referring consultant.

Please allow ample time to arrive for your appointment. Our aim is to see you promptly but we will inform you of any delays. If you have any further questions or would like more information please do not hesitate to contact us on the telephone number provided on your appointment letter.

Additional sources of information:

[Tests to measure your breathing during sleep | Asthma + Lung UK \(asthmaandlung.org.uk\)](http://asthmaandlung.org.uk)
[Patient Information \(artp.org.uk\)](http://artp.org.uk)

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If you require this information in another language or alternative format, please email the Patient Information team at ulth.patient.information@nhs.net