

CURE CARDIOVASCULAR CONSULTANTS

Tilt Table Test

Procedure: If you have had syncope (fainting) a tilt table test can help your doctor determine the cause of the problem. Tilt table testing is used to assess a common type of syncope, called vasovagal syncope, also referred to as neurocardiogenic syncope or the “common faint.” Vasovagal syncope may be triggered by standing for long periods, heat, pain, fear, the sight of blood, or emotional distress. Usually there are warning symptoms such as dizziness, nausea, and sweating. Sometimes, loss of consciousness occurs without warning. In vasovagal syncope, the nerves that control the function of the heart and blood vessels do not work properly. This can cause the heartbeat to slow down and blood pressure to drop when they should not. In turn, this may cause a loss of consciousness. The tilt table test helps determine whether a person is likely to have vasovagal syncope.

Before The Test:

- You will be asked not to eat or drink for at least 4 hours before the test.
- If you take heart medication, check with your doctor when you schedule the test. Certain medications may need to be stopped a day or two before the test.
- Make arrangements for someone to drive you home. You will not be permitted to drive yourself after the test.

Day Of The Test: The tilt table test is performed in the hospital. Several electrodes (small sticky patches) are placed on your chest to obtain an electrocardiogram (ECG) and monitor your heartbeat. A blood pressure cuff is placed on one arm to monitor your blood pressure during the test. An IV line is inserted into a vein in your other arm, so that fluids and medications can be injected, if needed.

You will then be asked to lie down on a special table that has a footboard and safety straps. The straps are fastened to your chest and legs. You first lie quietly for several minutes. The table is then moved until your head is nearly upright, a tilt of about 60 to 70 degrees. Even though you are lying on a table that is at a steep angle, you feel as if you’re standing on the footboard.

You remain in this upright position for up to 45 minutes. Your heart rate and blood pressure are continuously monitored. It is important that you let the doctor or nurse know if you develop symptoms, such as dizziness or nausea. If you complete the 45-minute period of upright tilt without developing significant drop in blood pressure, the table is lowered to the flat position, and you may undergo the second part of the test. The second part of the test evaluates how your blood pressure responds to a medication (Isuprel) that is very much like your own adrenaline. The medication is injected very slowly through the IV line, the table is again moved to an upright position, for up to another 45 minutes, while you are closely monitored. A complete tilt table test, including preparation for the test, generally lasts from one to two hours. The test is called “positive” (abnormal) if your blood pressure drops and you experience symptoms.

Immediately After The Test: You may feel a little unsettled and possibly queasy for the first few minutes. If this happens, you will be allowed to fully recover before you stand up and get dressed. The ordering doctor will discuss test results with you during a future visit. The information gained from this test helps the doctor make a more accurate diagnosis and develop a treatment plan that is best for you.

If you have any questions before your test please feel free to call our staff at **(760) 323-2174**.