

# ACTH Stimulation Test Protocol Instructions

## Why does my dog need this test?

The ACTH stimulation test is routinely used in the diagnosis and management of dogs with hyperadrenocorticism (HAC), sometimes referred to as Cushing's syndrome. This test measures the ability of the adrenal glands to secrete cortisol in response to an injection of a stimulating hormone called ACTH. Although your veterinarian may suspect HAC based on your dog's history and physical examination, tests to confirm the diagnosis are required before treatment can be started.

## What does this test involve?

There are three parts to this test. First, a blood sample will be collected from your dog. The ACTH is then injected, usually into the muscle near the hip. Finally, a second blood sample is collected one hour later. The test is not particularly painful or stressful for your dog.

## How long will my dog need to stay in the clinic?

Generally, the test can be completed within 90 minutes. If you are

anxious about leaving your dog, ask your veterinarian about staying in the clinic with your pet.

## How do I prepare my dog for this test?

Do not feed your dog the day of the test. Sometimes, feeding can cause fat to appear in the blood and this will affect the test results. Allow free access to water.

Let your veterinarian know about any medications your dog takes and ask if these should be given the day of the test. Be certain to provide information about any medications given by mouth or applied to the skin and ears.

## Can my dog be groomed or bathed the day of the test?

Stress and excitement can affect the results of this test. Therefore, bathing or grooming, etc., should be scheduled after the test is completed.