

Low Dose Dexamethasone Suppression Test Protocol Instructions

Why does my dog need this test?

The low dose dexamethasone suppression test (LDDST) is routinely used in the diagnosis of dogs with hyperadrenocorticism (HAC), sometimes referred to as Cushing's syndrome. This test measures the response of the pituitary gland to a small dose of dexamethasone. 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 four parts to this test. First, a blood sample is collected from your dog. A small dose of a steroid called dexamethasone is then injected, usually into the vein on the fore leg. Blood samples are then collected 4 and 8 hours later. The test is not particularly painful or stressful for your dog.

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

Generally, this test is started before 9 AM and takes the entire day to complete. If you are anxious about leaving your dog, ask your veterinarian if you can take your dog home in between the sampling times.

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 whether these medications should be given the day of the test. It is important to inform your veterinarian of all 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, it is not advisable to schedule any bathing or grooming, etc., until after the test is completed.