Vascular & Interventional Radiology Queensland

Venous sampling

Patient information

What is it?

Venous sampling is a minimally invasive procedure to collect venous blood from an organ so that hormone levels can be directly measured. The most common organs targeted for sampling at the adrenal glands, parathyroid glands or kidneys.

Who is it for?

You may be referred for venous sampling of the adrenal glands or the kidneys, as part of investigation for high blood pressure (hypertension). You may be referred for venous sampling of the parathyroid glands if you have had surgery to remove your parathyroid glands and there is still some parathyroid tissue still present that is not visible on non-invasive imaging (such as CT).

How is it done?

Venous sampling is done under local anaesthetic in an operating room with specialised medical imaging equipment. You may be required to stop anti-hypertensive medication for some time prior to the procedure if you are having adrenal or renal vein sampling.

Your interventional radiologist will use an ultrasound to guide a small tube into the vein in the groin. A catheter is then passed into the veins draining the organ of interest and several samples are taken. These samples are then sent to a pathology lab for assessment. It normally takes 3-5 working days to get the results of these tests.

What are the risks?

The risks of this procedure are very low, but it is important to discuss the risks and complications of this procedure with your interventional radiologist in full, but some of the risk associated with this procedure include:

- bleeding
- damage to sampled vessel

Follow up

You will receive a follow up phone from the clinic nurse within the first few days of your procedure, but you will otherwise not need any further follow up with your interventional radiologist.

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