

Eleven+

guide.

Having a blood test

Why am I having a blood test?

When you have been into a clinic appointment or attended a ward to see a doctor they may tell you that you need to have a blood test.

This means that they would like to take a small amount of your blood to send to the laboratories for testing. The doctor will be able to discuss the tests they do in the laboratories with you.

The blood test is taken by inserting the tip of a narrow needle into your vein. The needle is sometimes called a 'butterfly' as it has two wings at the base of the needle to help the doctor or nurse hold the needle securely.

Where will the blood be taken from?

A blood test can be taken from your arm on the inside of your elbow or from the back of your hand. The nurse or the doctor will discuss where to take the blood test from so that you can tell them if you want them to use a specific hand or arm. If you have any anxiety about needles, mention this to the doctor so that they can discuss other options for additional support with you.

What will happen before the blood test?

Before you have the blood test, you can have some cream put on the backs of your hands/on your arms to make the area feel numb for a short time.

The cream will be covered by a clear plaster and stay on for about 1 hour. You will still be able to use your hands when it is in place.

What if I don't have time to wait?

If you do not have time to wait we can use a cold spray to help stop the feeling of the blood test. The spray helps to numb the back of your hand by making it really cold. The effects of the cold spray wear off within a few seconds, but by that time the needle should be in place and it shouldn't be too sore.



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What happens in the treatment room?

When it is time to take the blood test, you will be invited into the treatment room. You can have a parent or adult sit with you whilst you have your blood taken.



You may be asked to take a seat on a chair or lie on a bed, whichever you feel most comfortable. Sometimes a pillow is placed under your arm to make it more comfortable and to help you relax.



Having something to do during the test can help to take your mind off it. You could read a book, look at a magazine or have a chat with the nurse.

The nurse will gently hold your arm. You may have a tight band called a tourniquet placed at the top of your arm. This helps the veins to stand out and makes it easier to take the blood test. As soon as the test is finished the doctor/nurse will take the tourniquet off.

Will the blood test hurt?

There will be a little scratch as the needle goes into the skin, but you should not be able to feel it too much in the areas you have had the cream or the spray. It is important to stay as still as possible to allow the doctor/nurse to take the blood test as quick as they can.



What happens after the blood test?

Once the test is finished the needle is removed and some pressure is applied to the area the needle was. This is to stop the bleeding and prevent a big bruise. You can apply the pressure yourself if you prefer or the nurse will do it for you.

Once it has stopped bleeding you can have a plaster applied if you want to or if not the area will be left uncovered.

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