

Tilt Table

*Fainting spells can be caused by a number of factors.
Tilt table testing is designed to evaluate how your body regulates blood pressure in response to simple stress.*

Expertise in Matters of the Heart

Tilt table testing is designed to evaluate how your body regulates blood pressure in response to some very simple stresses. Blood pressure is regulated by a set of nerves, which operate continuously. These nerves ensure that there is always enough blood going to the brain and to distribute blood to other organs according to their needs. These changes in blood pressure are accomplished by making changes in the way the heart beats and by making changes in the size of certain blood vessels.

At times, the nerves which control blood pressure may not operate properly and may cause a reaction which can cause your blood pressure to drop suddenly. This reaction may produce a fainting spell or a number of symptoms including severe lightheadedness. Tilt table testing is designed to determine the likelihood that a patient is susceptible to this type of reaction.

Patient preparation:

- Do not eat or drink 4 hours prior to your test.
- Take all medications as prescribed, but use only small sips of water to help you swallow your pills.
- If you have diabetes, ask your doctor for specific instructions on taking your medications and eating or drinking before the procedure.
- Bring a list of medications and prescribed doses with you to the lab.
- Wear comfortable clothes and shoes. Do not wear any jewelry.

- Arrange for transportation home following your procedure.

What to expect:

You will be asked to lie quietly on the table and keep your legs still. The table has three safety straps – one around your chest, one around your waist and one around your knees- which keep you from slipping as the table is moved.

You will be connected to three monitors during the test:

- Electrocardiogram (EKG). Electrodes are attached to your chest, which record the electrical impulses produced by your heart.
- Oximeter monitor. A clip on your finger continually monitors the level of oxygen in your blood.
- Blood pressure monitor. A cuff on your arm checks your blood pressure at intervals throughout the procedure.

Procedure

For the first ten minutes, you will relax while baseline data is collected. Then the head of the table will be raised to 80 degrees. Since many patients who experience a sudden drop in blood pressure do so after about 30 minutes, you will be asked to remain still in this position for about 40 minutes. You will be asked to alert staff of symptoms you experience. If you remain without symptoms after 40 minutes, the nurse practitioner, P.A. or physician will determine if nitroglycerin will be given to increase your heart rate and lower your

blood pressure. After the nitroglycerin is administered, the remainder of the test lasts 5-10 minutes longer. If you are without symptoms after this portion of the test than the test is complete. A possible side effect with this procedure is a headache.

The entire procedure lasts about 1 hour. During the test, you may pass out, you may feel the symptoms you have when you're about to pass out, or you may feel nothing at all. It is important to inform the medical staff of any symptoms you feel.

After the test:

You should have someone available to drive you home. Your doctor will review the results and make changes to your medication, or order additional medications or testing procedures if necessary.

Risks:

Tilt table testing is routinely very safe. However, as with any medical procedure, complications may occur. Our staff is trained to respond if an emergency occurs.

Test Results:

Test results will be discussed with you by your doctor.

Location:

Medical Center of the Rockies
2500 Rocky Mountain Avenue
Loveland, CO 80538