

Intravenous phentolamine test information

Why am I having a phentolamine test?

This test is carried out to see if this type of drug will reduce the amount of pain that you are suffering. If this test is successful you may be prescribed a similar drug in a tablet form. Your doctor will discuss this with you.

If you have little or no pain on your appointment date, please contact the Pain Clinic for advice (see below for details).

What is a phentolamine test?

Phentolamine is a drug occasionally used for treating high blood pressure, but when given in a tablet form sometimes has a pain killing effect. You will be given the drug slowly through a drip in the back of your hand. The test takes approximately 30 minutes and during this time you will be attached to a heart rate and blood pressure monitor. The nurse will ask you to measure your pain on a scale (see below) by moving the marker to a point on the scale which best describes the intensity of your pain.

0 = No pain _____ 10 = Worst pain you
can imagine

How will I feel afterwards?

You may experience the following symptoms during and after the test; flushing, a blocked nose, a fast heart rate, dizziness, diarrhoea, nausea and vomiting. These side effects are usually short lived but occasionally they may be more troublesome and last a few days. Please tell the nurse or doctor if you experience any of these symptoms.

You should be able to return to your normal activity the following day, although you should not drive for 24 hours following the procedure.

Are there any risks involved in a phentolamine test?

There is an element of risk involved in all the procedures and treatments that you may have at the pain clinic. However you should remember that these risks are usually minimal. Your doctor will discuss these fully before your procedure and will be happy to answer all your questions.

Who should I contact if I have any problems following treatment?

You can contact the Pain Clinic on between 9-2pm, Monday to Friday.

Outwith these hours you should contact your own GP or NHS 24.

Before you leave we will give you a letter for your GP, which you should hand in to your surgery on a few days after your treatment. If you need help overnight or at the weekend then give this letter to the doctor so that he/she will know what treatment you have had.