Gestational Diabetes Testing

This handout explains what to expect during gestational diabetes testing. Gestational diabetes begins in the fifth or sixth month of pregnancy. It happens when the body cannot use sugar (glucose) for energy the right way, just like standard diabetes. This causes high sugar levels in your blood. It often goes away after the baby is born. Risk factors include:

- Previous gestational diabetes
- Obesity
- High blood pressure
- Older age
- Family history of diabetes

To learn more about gestational diabetes, review *Health Facts For You* #8370 "Gestational Diabetes" for more information.

One-Hour Glucose Tolerance Test
Between 24-28 weeks of pregnancy, you will complete a one-hour glucose tolerance screening test. The test consists of drinking a glucose solution and getting your blood drawn. Please contact your doctor for a list of lab locations where you can complete this test.

Diet
You do not need to fast for this test. **Do not** eat or drink anything when you arrive until your blood has been drawn. Bring a protein snack, such as a peanut butter sandwich or cheese and crackers to eat after.

How to Complete the Test
Review and follow the instructions below.

1. On the day of the test, report to lab to get the glucose solution. While at lab, drink the entire bottle within five minutes. This is a timed blood draw. Note what time you started drinking the glucose solution.
2. **Do not** leave the building. Tell the lab staff if you are leaving the area. Return to the lab 45 minutes after the time you finished drinking the solution.
3. Tell them you have a "timed draw" and the time you started to drink the solution. You will then have your blood drawn at the 1-hour mark.

If your screening test is abnormal, your care team will contact you with next steps and decide if you will need to do a three-hour glucose tolerance test.

Symptoms
You may have symptoms of low blood sugar (hypoglycemia) during the test such as:

- Feeling weak, pale, or cold
- Clammy skin
- Sweating
- Nervousness

Eating a protein snack after the blood draw may help prevent these symptoms. Tell the lab staff right away if you feel sick.

Who to Call
If you have questions, please contact your provider through MyChart or call your provider listed in your After Visit Summary or After Hospital Care Plan. For a list of UW Health Clinics, visit www.uwhealth.org/

Your health care team may have given you this information as part of your care. If so, please use it and call if you have any questions. If this information was not given to you as part of your care, please check with your doctor. This is not medical advice. This is not to be used for diagnosis or treatment of any medical condition. Because each person's health needs are different, you should talk with your doctor or others on your health care team when using this information. If you have an emergency, please call 911. Copyright © 1/2026 University of Wisconsin Hospitals and Clinics Authority. All rights reserved. Produced by the Department of Nursing HF# 8469