

ELSA

50+ Health & Life

NatCen
Social Research



The nurse visit

A quick guide

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MANCHESTER
1824

The University of Manchester

40_P12924_MS_Nurse Survey Leaflet_v1



Institute for
Fiscal Studies



THE NURSE VISIT IN BRIEF

A registered nurse will ask you some further questions. They will also ask your permission to take some measurements, such as your blood pressure, described in more detail later in this booklet.

You do not have to have any measurements taken but, of course, we very much hope you will agree, as these are an important part of this study. For the results to make as much impact as possible, it's important that we learn about all types of people in different states of health.

As with all the information we collect we take great care to protect the confidentiality of all information and test results.

MEASUREMENTS

Blood pressure

The nurse would like to measure your blood pressure using an inflatable cuff that goes around your upper arm.

High blood pressure can be a health problem, but it is difficult to measure accurately. A person's blood pressure is influenced by age and can vary from day to day with emotion, meals, tobacco, alcohol, medication, temperature and pain. Although the nurse will tell you your blood pressure along with an indication of its meaning, a diagnosis cannot be made on a measurement taken on a single occasion.



Physical functioning

We would like to measure your upper body strength. Grip strength is an indicator of people's general health and it has also been shown to be linked to people's future health. The upper body strength measurement involves gripping a handle to assess your grip strength.



BLOOD SAMPLE

We would be very grateful if you would agree to provide us with a sample of blood. This is an important part of the study, as the analysis of the blood samples will tell us a lot about the health of the population. You are of course free to choose not to give a blood sample. Your nurse will ask for your written permission before a blood sample is taken.

Your nurse will take a small amount of blood (no more than 22ml, about 4 teaspoons) from your arm. The blood sample will be sent to a medical laboratory to test the following:

Total cholesterol | HDL cholesterol | Triglycerides

Cholesterol is a type of fat present in the blood, related to diet. Too much cholesterol in the blood increases the risk of heart disease. Triglycerides are another type of fat present in the blood, related to diet.

Fibrinogen

Fibrinogen is a protein necessary for blood clotting and high levels are also associated with a higher risk of heart disease.

C-reactive protein

The level of C-reactive protein in the blood gives information on inflammatory activity in the body, and it is also associated with risk of heart disease.

Ferritin | Glycated haemoglobin and haemoglobin | White cell count

Ferritin and haemoglobin are measures of iron levels in the body and are related to diet and other factors, together with white cell count they can indicate anaemia.

PAXgene

The PAXgene tube is a special test tube that allows us to stabilise and store cells in your blood for a long time. These cells will then be used in the future genetic studies to measure new molecules that will help our understanding of health risks in later life.

Blood samples will not be tested for the HIV (AIDS) virus.

Vitamin D

We obtain vitamin D from the diet and also from sunshine, where the ultraviolet light converts vitamin D into an active form in the skin. We need vitamin D for healthy bones. The only way we know if someone has enough vitamin D for the body's needs is to measure it in the blood.

Insulin-like growth factor 1 (IGF-1)

IGF-1 is a hormone that helps control reactions to stress and regulate various body processes including digestion, the immune system, mood, and energy usage.

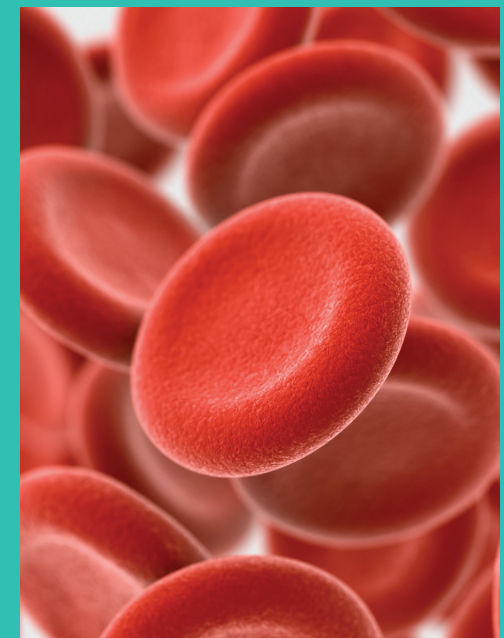
Storing blood

We would like to store a small amount of blood for future analysis. Medical tests of blood samples are becoming more advanced and specialised. This means that we may be able to learn more about the health of the population by re-testing blood in the future. We will ask separately for permission to store blood.

Fasting blood samples

The nurse may, in some cases, ask you if you are willing to give your blood sample before you have had anything to eat. Blood samples collected from you when you have "fasted" can be tested for triglycerides and glucose.

Glucose levels found in "fasting" blood provides information on how well your body handles sugar and are associated with risk of diabetes.



LETTING YOUR GP KNOW THE RESULTS



With your agreement we would like to send your blood pressure and, if applicable, your blood sample results to your GP. Your GP can interpret the results in the light of your medical history which could help improve your health.

If the GP considers your results to be satisfactory, then nothing further will be done. If your results showed, for example, that your blood pressure was above average for someone of your sex and age, your GP may wish to measure it again. Often it is possible to reduce blood pressure by treatment or by changing your diet. It is for you and your GP to decide if any action is needed.

Your nurse will ask for your permission to pass your results on to your GP.



ARE THERE ANY IMPLICATIONS FOR INSURANCE COVER?



If you agree to your results being sent to your GP, then they use them in medical reports about you. This may occur if you apply for a new life assurance policy, or for a new job. Insurance companies may ask those who apply for new policies if they have had any medical tests. If so, the insurance company may ask if they can obtain a medical report from the GP.

Because of the Access to Medical Reports Act 1988 an insurance company cannot ask your GP for a medical report on you without your permission. Having given your permission, you then have the right to see the report before your GP sends it to the insurance company and you can ask for the report to be amended if you consider it to be incorrect or misleading.

The purpose of a medical report is for the company to judge whether to charge normal premiums, whether to charge higher premiums or whether, in exceptional circumstances, to turn down life insurance on account of the person's health.

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FOR MORE INFORMATION

We hope this leaflet answers the questions you may have, and that it shows the importance of the study. If you have any other questions, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Your co-operation is very much appreciated.

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THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR YOUR HELP WITH THIS IMPORTANT STUDY.

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