

# Cortisol Self-Assessment

These questions will help you identify possible signs and symptoms of excess cortisol.

Fill out the questions below and bring them to your healthcare professional to help start the conversation about whether a dexamethasone suppression test (DST) might be right for you.

A DST is 1 of 3 tests available to measure cortisol levels and is the most sensitive testing option.

*If you are currently taking steroids for a medical condition, please contact your healthcare professional to discuss whether a DST is right for you.*

## Question 1

**Excess cortisol can affect the body in many ways.  
Which of the following have you experienced?**

Select all that apply.

- |                                                                        |                                                                                                               |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> High blood pressure<br>(even with medication) | <input type="checkbox"/> Kidney stones                                                                        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> High blood sugar<br>(even with medication)    | <input type="checkbox"/> Weak/brittle bones<br>and bone fractures                                             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Unexplained weight gain                       | <input type="checkbox"/> Trouble healing from wounds                                                          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Blood clots or a history<br>of blood clots    | <input type="checkbox"/> Trouble remembering things,<br>difficulty concentrating,<br>brain fog, forgetfulness |
|                                                                        | <input type="checkbox"/> None of the above                                                                    |

## Question 2

**How many medications are you currently taking to manage  
your high blood pressure or high blood sugar?**

Select one answer from each column below.

**For high blood pressure:**

- ☐ 0 medications
- ☐ 1-2 medications
- ☐ 3-4 medications
- ☐ 5 or more medications

**For high blood sugar:**

- ☐ 0 medications
- ☐ 1-2 medications
- ☐ 3-4 medications
- ☐ 5 or more medications

*Question 3*

**In addition to medication, what else do you do to manage your symptoms?**

Select all that apply.

- |                                                                 |                                            |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Eat a balanced diet                    | <input type="checkbox"/> Manage stress     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Exercise (specify type): _____         | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Practice mindfulness and/or meditation | <input type="checkbox"/> None of the above |

*Question 4*

**Excess cortisol can affect your mood.  
Which of the following have you experienced?**

Select all that apply.

- |                                                                     |                                            |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Extreme mood swings                        | <input type="checkbox"/> Anxiety           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Depression, feeling hopeless               | <input type="checkbox"/> None of the above |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Irritability, anger, feeling "short-fused" |                                            |

*Question 5*

**Excess cortisol can also affect your energy levels.  
Which of the following have you experienced?**

Select all that apply.

- |                                                           |                                             |
|-----------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Muscle weakness                  | <input type="checkbox"/> Sexual dysfunction |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Extreme fatigue, easily fatigued | <input type="checkbox"/> None of the above  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Difficulty sleeping (insomnia)   |                                             |

## Key questions to ask a healthcare professional:

- Are you familiar with a dexamethasone suppression test (DST)?
- What are the next steps for getting a DST?
- If the results show that I have excess cortisol, what would be the next step?
- If I don't have excess cortisol, what else can we do to get my high blood pressure, high blood sugar, and/or other signs and symptoms in check?

### Notes

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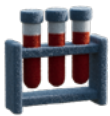
# Important information before getting a DST:

**Before getting a dexamethasone suppression test (DST), tell your healthcare professional about all medications you're currently taking and any health issues you're experiencing. These may affect your test results.**



*Step 1*

Your healthcare professional will prescribe a 1 mg dexamethasone tablet to take the night before you're scheduled to have your blood drawn. **The tablet should be taken between 11:00 PM and 12:00 AM.**



*Step 2*

The following morning, you will have your **blood drawn between 8:00 AM and 9:00 AM.** The blood sample will then be sent to a lab.



*Step 3*

The lab will use your blood sample to test your cortisol level. The results will be sent to you and your healthcare professional. **Be sure to discuss the results with your healthcare professional.**

Find answers to **frequently asked questions about excess cortisol** and more



Scan to learn more, or visit [cortisolincontrol.com/FAQs](https://cortisolincontrol.com/FAQs)

Sign up to **receive additional information and resources** about excess cortisol and testing



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# Information for your healthcare professional:

## Why a dexamethasone suppression test (DST)?

The DST is the most sensitive testing option and measures cortisol secretion from the adrenal gland. If you take a 1 mg dexamethasone tablet, cortisol secretion from the adrenal gland should be suppressed. However, if your cortisol level remains high after taking dexamethasone, it could mean the cause of excess cortisol is something inside your body, like a growth on the adrenal or pituitary gland.

## How are DST results interpreted?

According to the Endocrine Society Clinical Practice Guidelines, **a cortisol level greater than 1.8 µg/dL** after a 1 mg dose of dexamethasone is considered a positive test.

**µg/dL** = micrograms per deciliter.

This is a common unit to use when measuring how much of a substance is in your blood.

Learn more about administering a DST  
at [labcorp.com](https://www.labcorp.com)