

Centre for Hearing and Balance Disorders

Melatonin for hearing tests

Your child has been referred for a hearing testing in which sedation is used. This information explains more about the sedation medicine that will be used.

What is melatonin?

Melatonin is a naturally occurring sleep hormone produced in the brain. It is produced at night and helps our sleep patterns. It has been shown to be useful for sedation in children to help them sleep during a hearing test.

What is the dose?

Children under five years will need 5 mg. Children over five years will need 10 mg. Melatonin comes as a liquid; you will be told how much to give your child.

Does it work?

Melatonin has been shown to work successfully in eight out of ten children. It is most successful in children under three years of age, but three out of four children over three years will still respond.

It takes about half an hour for it to cause sleepiness and it is usually helpful if the lighting in the room is dimmed.



Patient Information

Is it safe?

Melatonin is not a licensed medicine and so not many large tests have been carried out on its long-term safety. However, it has been used in many hospitals in children who are undergoing different tests and for sleep regulation in children with sleeping problems.

The melatonin we supply is made by a company who also make licensed medicines so we can be sure it is made in good, controlled conditions. In some countries melatonin is available for sale in pharmacies and it is used to combat jet lag and help shift workers sleep.

Are there side effects?

Melatonin is usually well tolerated. Some drowsiness and possible irritability may remain on the day of the test.

Body temperature may be reduced, and your child could complain of feeling cold.

If your child is epileptic, it is possible that melatonin may induce a fit. Please discuss this with your consultant.

Very rarely melatonin has caused confusion, itching, and feeling sick (nausea).

If you wish to discuss this further, please ask your doctor or pharmacist.

More information

If you have any questions or would like more information, please contact the Centre for Hearing and Balance Disorders on 024 7696 6444.

The Trust has access to interpreting and translation services. If you need this information in another language or format, please contact 024 7696 6444 and we will do our best to meet your needs.

Patient Information

The Trust operates a smoke-free policy.

Did we get it right?

We would like you to tell us what you think about our services. This helps us make further improvements and recognise members of staff who provide a good service.

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