Desmopressin (DDAVP) Challenge

What is Desmopressin?
Desmopressin (DDAVP) is a man-made form of vasopressin, a hormone made by your body. It can be given into a vein or as a nose spray (Stimate®). DDAVP is used to stop bleeding or prevent bleeding with surgery or dental work. It is most often given to people with mild von Willebrand disease, mild hemophilia A, or platelet function disorders.

Why do I need a DDAVP Challenge?
This test is given to see if DDAVP will increase the clotting factor in your blood enough to prevent bleeding. For a small number of people DDAVP will not work.

What can I expect during my appointment?
Before DDAVP is given you will need a blood test to measure the amount of clotting factor in your blood. This can be done during a clinic visit or on the day of the challenge.

If DDAVP is given into a vein a nurse may place numbing cream on your arm then insert an IV. The medication is given over 30 minutes.

If DDAVP is given as a nose spray (Stimate®) it may be given in clinic by a nurse or at home as ordered by your provider.

You will have a blood test 60-90 minutes after the medicine is given to see if your clotting factor levels go up. The amount of clotting factor in your blood will be highest about 90 minutes after DDAVP is given. You may need to have one more blood test 6-8 hours later to see if your clotting factor level stays up.

Precautions while taking DDAVP
For 24 hours after DDAVP limit the amount of fluid you drink, especially plain water. Drink only to satisfy thirst.

Sometimes, taking DDAVP can cause severe water retention which can lead to low blood sodium levels and cause seizures and coma. If you have neurologic or kidney problems, heart failure or are very young or elderly you may need to drink less fluids.
Possible side effects that usually do not need medical attention

More common:
- Temporary facial flushing
- Mild headache
- Mild water retention

Less common:
- Stuffy nose
- Sore throat

Side effects that need medical attention
- Headache not relieved by Tylenol®/acetaminophen
- Dizziness or fainting
- Vision problems
- Confusion
- Seizures
- Signs of an allergic reaction (fever or chills, rash or hives, wheezing, trouble breathing (call 911))

Results
Your healthcare provider will call you with your test results within 1 week. If DDAVP increases your clotting factor levels enough then you are a responder to DDAVP. If you have only a partial response or no change in clotting factor levels then your healthcare provider will recommend a different treatment. More testing may be required.

For questions or concerns please contact the UWHC Comprehensive Program for Bleeding Disorders:
Nursing: (608) 890-9494 or (608) 890-9493
Toll Free: 1-877-737-6707
After hours: (608) 262-0486 or 1-800-323-8942 (ask for Hematologist on call)