

Porterbrook Clinic

Sheffield Care Trust

**Andrology Service
(Urology)**

Sheffield Teaching Hospitals

Investigations

DIR

Information for Users of our service

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Introduction

Porterbrook clinic is able to offer a number of investigations to try and help both you and us understand the cause of your problems. Two of these tests involve you wearing a device which is attached by either straps or adhesive patches to the penis. The exact nature and choice of the investigation will be discussed with you by your clinician. The gold standard test, the Rigiscan, has been in use for many years and the clinic has a decade of experience in using and interpreting the results of the Rigiscan. The Rigiscan measures radial rigidity and helps us to assess how hard and firm an erection can become. The NEVA on the other hand measures changes of volume of blood into the penis during states of arousal and provides us with information on the capacity for inflow to the penis. Ultrasound can help identify and quantify the blood flow velocities into the penis (MIDUS). A fourth test, the DIR, measures rigidity of the tip of penis. A fifth test measures nerve conduction associated with sensations (GSA). All of the information collected by the clinic for patients with any investigations are held in a coded format.

The DIR

The DIR is a portable version of the established Digital Inflection Rigidometer. It is designed to provide maximum efficiency in patients with erectile dysfunction and monitoring of treatment. Because the test is done entirely in private it reduces to a maximum any psychological inhibition that may occur with staff entering investigation rooms.

The device examines the buckling force before, during and after treatment for patients with erectile dysfunction. It does this by us asking you to apply the machine to the tip of the penis at various stages during the assessment. As such it helps establish eligibility for treatment as well as monitoring response for various treatment therapies including intracavernosal injections.

During the initial part of your consultation we will demonstrate the device to you and you are then left alone for the first part of the test. This involves using the device on a number of occasions whilst watching audiovisual material. It is usually necessary for us to proceed with an injection of Alprostadil which is injected into the side of the

penis using a very small needle and which is usually painless.

Where necessary audio visual material and vibration may be necessary to try to maximise the erection that you achieve and you are then able to use the device within the room to measure rigidity.

It is necessary over the period of this test to keep in communication by telephone or radio, to be able to monitor the time certain stages of the measurements occur.

The DIR measures axial rigidity and relative intracavernosal pressure. It is different from the Rigiscan and provides alternative information which may be important in your clinical care.

Please do read this in conjunction with the information leaflet on penile injections and your letter of appointment which give specific details of what you need to take into account before attending for a DIR investigation.

Important notes

Do bring with you any reading, TV glasses and medication you may require. Would you please avoid sexual activity for 24 hours prior to the investigations and take no drug treatment for erection difficulties for three days. Also, do not drink, smoke (or use nicotine patches or gum) within two hours of the tests. Otherwise, do eat and drink as normal and take any normal medication.

