

The Tilt Table Test is used to determine a cause of syncope (fainting or loss of consciousness). There can be different reasons people experience syncope. For some people it is related to an abnormal nervous system reflex causing the heart to slow and the blood vessels to dilate (open up) lowering the blood pressure. When this happens there is a reduced amount of blood to the brain causing one to faint. The Tilt Table Test is performed to evaluate these causes of syncope (fainting). This type of syncope is called vasovagal, neurocardiogenic or abnormal vasoregulatory syncope and is considered benign (not dangerous or life-threatening), except for the injuries that can happen when one faints unexpectedly. The Tilt Table Test is performed to reproduce (bring on) symptoms of syncope while the person is being closely monitored.

A Trained Nurse or Cardiac Technician and a Physician will perform the test. The patient will be asked to lie down on a special examining table with safety belts and a foot rest. A blood pressure cuff is attached to the other arm to monitor the blood pressure during the test. The patient is attached with electrodes (adhesive stickers) to an electrocardiograph (ECG) recorder to monitor your heart rate. For your safety, you are belted onto the tilt table. It is then tilted upright to a 60-80 degree vertical angle for approximately 40 minutes. If you faint during the test, the table will be returned to a flat (horizontal) position and you will be continued to be monitored closely while you recover. Recovery is usually immediate. This is considered "positive" for vasovagal or neurocardiogenic syncope. Your doctor will be notified of the results. He/she can discuss with you what the best treatment may be. If you do not experience fainting during the test it is considered "negative". Your physician can discuss other tests you may need to undergo to determine the cause of your fainting.