**Dexamethasone Suppression Test**

**Rationale:**
Dexamethasone is a cortisol analog that suppresses the secretion of adrenocorticotropic (ACTH), and thus cortisol in normal patients, but not those with Cushing’s Syndrome. A low, oral dose of dexamethasone is given at 2300 to 2400, with blood collected for a cortisol level at 0800 the following morning.

**Patient Preparation:**
No patient preparation is necessary

**Materials:**
Dexamethasone, 1.0 mg tablet  
Plain, red-top tube(s) or red-gel blood collection tube(s)

**Procedure:**
1. Obtain a 1.0 mg oral dose of dexamethasone.  
2. Administer it to the patient at 2300 to 2400.  
3. Collect a plain, red-top tube(s) or gel blood collection tube(s) at 0800 the following morning.  
4. Send labeled specimens and request slips to the laboratory promptly.

**Reference Interval:**
Normal: cortisol 3.0 mcg/dL  
Cushing’s Syndrome: cortisol >10 mcg/dL

**References:**