

BLOOD TEST INFORMATION SHEET

When patients have blood tests, they frequently ask for more information about the test they are having. Here we have put together some useful information about the most common blood tests that are carried out by the surgery. Most results are received back at the surgery within 1 working day. The only exception to this is HBA1C results which can take up to 2-3 working days.

Results are received electronically from the laboratory and will be visible on your patient record and NHS App once they have been reviewed and commented on by a clinician. In some cases, you may receive a text message or telephone call from the surgery about your results if further action is required. Please make sure your contact details on your medical record are up to date.

CHOLESTEROL

A CHOLESTEROL blood test measures the amount of 4 different types of fat in your blood.

- TOTAL CHOLESTEROL – This measures the amount of cholesterol in the blood.
- LOW DENSITY LIPOPROTEIN (LDL) – Too much LDL in the blood may cause plaque to form in the blood vessels which can cause heart attacks or a stroke.
- HIGH DENSITY LIPOPROTEIN (HDL) – This helps to carry away LDL and keeps arteries open allowing blood to flow freely.
- TRIGLYCERIDES – These are 3 different types of fatty acids; Saturated fat, unsaturated fat and glycerol. If Triglycerides are too high, they can contribute towards heart disease.

HBA1C

A HBA1C blood test measures the average amount of sugar that has attached itself to the red blood cells in the last 8-12 weeks. Every time a red blood cell is produced any sugar in your body attaches itself to the red blood cell. Red blood cells live for approximately 120 days. A HBA1C test will show:-

- You do not have diabetes
- You are at risk of developing diabetes
- If you already have a diagnosis of diabetes, how well it is currently being controlled.

FULL BLOOD COUNT

A FULL BLOOD COUNT (FBC) is a blood test that measures the number and size of the following cells that make up your blood:-

- Red Blood Cells (RBC)
- White Blood Cells (WBC)
- Platelets

A FULL BLOOD COUNT can help to show if you have an infection or anaemia.

FERRITIN

Ferritin is an acute-phase inflammatory protein, and its levels are also strongly correlated with iron stores in your blood. A FERRITIN blood test measures your stored iron levels. Low levels could indicate an iron deficiency. High levels could indicate iron overload, inflammation, or an infection.

VITAMIN B12

Vitamin B12 is an essential vitamin that the body needs to maintain healthy nerve cells and produces red blood cells. We do not produce B12 naturally. It is found in animal products such as meat, fish and dairy foods. It can also be found in fortified foods or supplements. Low levels of B12 can lead to tiredness or nerve damage.

FOLATE

Folate or Vitamin B9, helps to produce red blood cells and DNA. It is naturally found in some foods and artificially added to others.

ERYTHROCYTE SEDIMENTATION RATE

A blood test for ERYTHROCYTE SEDIMENTATION RATE (ESR) measures whether there is increased inflammation within the body. It cannot by itself diagnose a specific medical condition, but it can indicate levels of inflammation.

C-REACTIVE PROTEIN

A test for C-REACTIVE PROTEIN (CRP) measures for proteins produced by the liver when there is inflammation. This kind of inflammation is usually caused by infection, tissue injury or chronic inflammatory diseases such as autoimmune conditions.

LIVER FUNCTION TEST

A LIVER FUNCTION TEST (LFT) looks at markers that assess the health of the liver. It looks at inflammation or damage in the liver and can help to find the cause of symptoms such as jaundice. It can be used to monitor the health of the liver in people with known liver disease.

THYROID FUNCTION TEST

A THYROID FUNCTION TEST (TFT) measures the levels of Thyroid Stimulating Hormones (TSH) and Thyroxine T4. Levels out of normal range can indicate to either a diagnosis of Hypothyroidism (Underactive Thyroid) or Hyperthyroidism (Overactive Thyroid).

UREA AND ELECTROLYTES

This blood test, also known as U's & E's, looks at the levels of Urea and Electrolytes.

- UREA – This is a metabolic by-product of protein normally cleared from the blood by the kidneys. A high level may indicate kidney problems.
- ELECTROLYTES – These are a combination of Sodium, Potassium & Creatinine. This test looks at how well your kidneys are functioning.

ESTIMATED GLOMERULAR FILTRATION RATE

An ESTIMATED GLOMERULAR FILTRATION RATE (eGFR) test is used to measure how well your kidneys are filtering waste from your blood. This test can help to detect Chronic Kidney Disease (CKD).

LUTEINIZING HORMONE, FOLLICLE STIMULATING HORMONE & OESTROGEN

These hormones are produced by the pituitary gland in the brain and can be found in both men & women.

- LUTEINIZING HORMONES (LH) is a blood test that can show levels of fertility.
- FOLLICLE STIMULATING HORMONES (FSH) is a test that measures for the level of this hormone in the blood. During pregnancy this level is low but during and after menopause the level will be high.
- OESTROGEN is a sex hormone which supports sexual, reproductive and bone health. This level may be tested during pregnancy or menopause.