

Blood Testing

Information for patients



Why do I need a blood test?

Blood tests are requested by the healthcare professionals responsible for your care. The cells and molecules in your blood sample are analysed in the lab, and the results are used to screen for, diagnose or monitor health conditions.

What will happen to my blood sample?

Your sample will be labelled with your details and sent to the laboratory. It will be booked onto the computer system and processed by our automated analysers. Once the analysis is complete, the results are checked by healthcare scientists to ensure they are accurate. If required, the scientists may add further tests or discuss the results with your Doctor to ensure that you receive the best possible care. Your information will be kept confidential and your sample will be safely disposed of after three days.

I had a blood test recently, why do I need another?

Some conditions or medications can cause rapid changes to how organs function, so some tests must be checked frequently. Different tests require certain tube types, so several tubes with different coloured lids may be collected.



When will the results be available?

Results from commonly requested blood tests are usually available within hours of receiving your sample. However, results from some specialised tests may take days or weeks to complete, especially if your sample needs to be sent away for analysis at a specialist laboratory. Results are not available to patients directly from our laboratory; patients are advised to contact the healthcare professional who requested the tests.

What are you testing for?

At a large NHS Trust like Leeds, we have very well equipped laboratories and therefore perform a great number of different tests. However, there are some commonly requested tests that healthcare professionals use:

Urea and electrolytes (U&E) - mainly used as a measure of kidney function and includes eGFR (estimated glomerular filtration rate). The higher the eGFR, the better the kidney function.

Liver function tests (LFT) - shows whether there is any damage to liver cells or blockage of vessels and channels in the liver.

Full blood count (FBC) - shows the number, type and size of the red and white blood cells in your body.

C-reactive protein (CRP) - shows whether there is active inflammation occurring, usually in response to infection or other inflammatory disease.

International normalised ratio (INR) and clotting screen - measures how quickly blood will clot once out of the body. Often used to monitor patients on Warfarin or before a surgical procedure.

Glycated haemoglobin (HbA1c) - used as a marker for diabetes and shows how well an individual controls blood glucose levels.

Coeliac screen – this test is run in our Immunology laboratory to detect anti-tissue transglutaminase antibodies, a marker of Coeliac disease.

Where can I find more information?

Please visit Lab Tests Online UK, a free, evidence-based and not-for-profit resource to help patients understand why tests are performed and what the results mean:

<http://labtestsonline.org.uk>



Lab Tests Online® UK
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