

# Chapter 9: Glossary of Lab Tests

## Glossary of Lab Tests

If you have blood drawn at another clinic, have the lab send a copy of the results to you. You will be having lots of lab tests.

The following is a list of common lab tests. Ask your nephrologist or transplant coordinator if you have questions.

| Test   | What it is  |
|--|---|
| <b>Albumin</b>                               | It is a protein made in your liver. This blood test checks how well your liver is working.  |
| <b>Alk p-tase<br/>(alkaline phosphatase)</b> | It is an enzyme in your body. This blood test can help tell how well your liver is working.   |
| <b>AST<br/>(aspartate amino transferase)</b> | It is an enzyme in your body. This blood test can help tell how well your heart, liver and kidneys are working.   |
| <b>Bicarbonate</b>                           | It is an electrolyte that helps control the amount of acid in your blood. This test checks the acidity level of your blood.   |
| <b>Bilirubin</b>                             | It is made when red blood cells break down at the end of their life cycle. Your liver filters it out of your body. This blood test checks how well your liver is working.   |
| <b>BUN<br/>(blood urea nitrogen)</b>         | It is a waste product in your blood. Your kidneys filter it out of your body. This urine test checks how well your kidneys are working.   |
| <b>Calcium</b>                               | It is needed for your muscles to tighten, heart to work, blood to clot, and nerves to work. This blood test checks the calcium level in your body.  |
| <b>Chloride</b>                              | It is an electrolyte and works with sodium to influence your water balance. This blood test checks the chloride in your body.   |
| <b>Cholesterol</b>                           | It is a fat substance made in your body and found in certain foods. It is important for energy, making hormones, making bile acids and cells. High levels can cause clogged arteries and a higher risk of heart disease. This blood test checks the total cholesterol in your body. |

| Test                                      | What it is   |
|---|--|
| <b>Creatinine</b>                         | It is a waste product in your blood. Your kidneys filter it out of your body. This blood test checks how well your kidneys are working.  |
| <b>Creatinine clearance</b>               | This test measures creatinine levels in both a sample of blood and a sample of urine from a 24-hour urine collection. The results are used to calculate the amount of creatinine that has been cleared from the blood and passed into the urine. This calculation allows for a general evaluation of the amount of blood that is being filtered by the kidneys in a 24-hour time period. |
| <b>Glucose</b>                            | It is the energy source that helps your body cells to live. It is formed when your food digests (breaks down). Your body makes insulin to keep the glucose level in check. This blood test checks the glucose level in your body.  |
| <b>HDL<br/>(high density lipoprotein)</b> | It is the “good” cholesterol that carries cholesterol from your blood to your liver. This blood test checks the HDL level in your body.  |
| <b>Hematocrit</b>                         | Hematocrit means “to separate blood.” This blood test tells the percentage of red blood cells in your blood.   |
| <b>Hemoglobin</b>                         | It is the main part of red blood cells. It helps deliver oxygen to your cells. This blood test measures your blood’s hemoglobin level.   |
| <b>LDL<br/>(low density lipoprotein)</b>  | It is the “bad” cholesterol that carries cholesterol to your body’s cells. High levels of LDL can narrow blood vessels. This blood test checks the LDL level in your body.   |
| <b>Magnesium</b>                          | It is a mineral you need for energy, to build proteins, help your muscles work, and help your blood clot. This blood test checks the magnesium level in your body.   |
| <b>Phosphorus</b>                         | It is a mineral you need for bones and body cells to live and grow. This blood test checks the phosphorous level in your body.   |

| Test  | What it is   |
|---|--|
| <b>Platelets</b>                            | These blood cells are needed to help your blood clot. When levels are low, you can have bleeding that is difficult to stop. This blood test checks the level of platelets in your body.  |
| <b>Potassium</b>                            | It is an element (electrolyte) that helps your heart maintain a regular heartbeat. Your kidneys control the amount of potassium in your blood. This blood test checks the level of potassium in your body.   |
| <b>Protein</b>                              | It is important to keep your cells and muscles healthy. This blood test checks the level of protein in your body.  |
| <b>PSA<br/>(prostatic specific antigen)</b> | It is a protein that is made by the prostate gland in men. When a man's prostate is enlarged or has prostate cancer, the PSA level can become high. This blood test checks the level of PSA in your body.  |
| <b>Sodium</b>                               | It is an element (electrolyte) that causes your body to hold (retain) fluid. Your kidneys control the amount of sodium in your blood. This blood test checks the level of sodium in your body.   |
| <b>Triglycerides</b>                        | It is a fat substance made in your liver. It is important for giving you energy. High levels can cause clogged arteries and a higher risk of heart disease. This blood test checks the triglyceride level in your body. It may mean you are having problems with your liver or pancreas. |
| <b>Uric acid</b>                            | Uric acid is a waste product in your blood. Your kidneys filter it out of your body. This test checks the level of uric acid in your blood.  |
| <b>White blood cell count</b>               | These blood cells help your body fight off infections. This blood test checks the level of white blood cells in your body.   |