

# Your Blood Test



## Patient Information – Blood Test Centre

Canterbury Health Laboratories is part of Health New Zealand | Canterbury, Te Whatu Ora | Waitaha. We have collection rooms at several hospital locations in Canterbury including the outpatient departments of Christchurch Hospital, Christchurch Women's Hospital, Burwood Hospital and the laboratory at Ashburton Hospital.

### What is a blood test?

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A blood test is a laboratory analysis performed on a blood sample, which is usually taken from a vein in the arm using a needle.

As blood flows throughout our bodies, it acts as the courier service for our body's nutrients, and oxygen delivery to our organs, as well as acting as the rubbish collector for waste products.

As a result, our bloodstream can be affected by many medical conditions and drugs.

### Why do I need a blood test?

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A blood test's most important role is in aiding medical staff, including your GP, to make decisions about your health and wellbeing.

#### Your Doctor may order a blood test for several different reasons:

1. To provide information to assist with a diagnosis
2. To confirm a diagnosis
3. To monitor treatment
4. To allow early diagnosis of an illness before symptoms arise
5. To ensure that the selected treatment for an illness is the most appropriate

### What should I expect?

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If your Doctor requests a blood test, they will print a form for you to take to the blood test centre or make an electronic request.

We accept all laboratory blood test request forms.

The person who takes your blood is called a phlebotomist. They will lead you into a private room or cubicle, where they will ask your name and date of birth to make sure they have the right person for the request form in their hand.

The correct tubes for the tests will be selected by the phlebotomist, and your details hand written onto them, to make sure the correct person's blood is in the correct tubes.

After the blood is collected, a plaster may be placed where the needle went in as it may bleed.

You will be reminded not to lift heavy objects or possibly even your hand bag with the arm you had the blood taken from, as the area may bruise or bleed.

## Why so many tubes?

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Why do so many different tubes of blood need to be taken for a routine blood test? The tubes all have different coloured lids such as blue, purple, green and yellow.

Each coloured tube has a different substance inside to stop the blood clotting and are they used depending upon the type of blood test requested by your doctor.

There are also smaller test tubes for younger children where less blood needs to be taken.

## How do I get my results?

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Most common laboratory tests are done on the day they are collected. Some may take a little longer depending on what test the laboratory needs to do.

Your test results will be sent directly to the person who requested them, usually your GP.

Most GP practices will allow you to ring the nurse to discuss your results for routine blood tests but ask your practice what they would like you to do.

For more information about:

- hospital and specialist services, go to [www.cdhb.health.nz](http://www.cdhb.health.nz)
- your health and medication, go to [www.healthinfo.org.nz](http://www.healthinfo.org.nz)

## Contact us

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