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| **Prolactin** |
| **Synonyms** |  | N/A |
| **Clinical Indication** |  | Prolactin should be measured as part of investigations into loss of libido, infertility, menstrual disturbances and gynaecomastia. Prolactin-secreting tumours can present with visual disturbance, headache etc. Prolactin may be added on to a sample in response to suppressed pituitary hormones (LH/FSH/TSH) to investigation pituitary dysfunction.The use of prolactin in providing supportive evidence for a genuine epileptic seizure is severely limited by the need for a sample within 30 minutes of the fit. Elevated prolactin levels may occur due to (the 5 Ps):* **Physiological** - stress, exercise, lactation, pregnancy
* **Pharmacological** - [drugs](https://g14167.gael-config.net/QPulseDocumentService/Documents.svc/documents/active/attachment?number=PF-PIP-12), especially neuroleptics, antiemetic’s, SSRI's
* **Pituitary** - prolactinoma or other tumour causing stalk compression
* Non-**Pituitary** - PCOS, hypothyroidism, renal failure
* **Problems** - [Macroprolactin](https://g14167.gael-config.net/QPulseDocumentService/Documents.svc/documents/active/attachment?number=PF-PTD-205) (non-pathological increase in apparent prolactin)
 |
| **Part of Profile / See Also** |  | N/A |
| **Request Form** |  | Combined Pathology manual blood form or ICE request |
| **Availability / Frequency of Analysis** |  | On request |
| **Turnaround Time** |  | Same day (Monday to Friday) |
| **Patient Preparation** |  | None required |
| **Sample Requirements** |  |  |
|  | **Specimen Type** |  | Serum |
|  | **Volume** |  | 2 ml |
|  | **Container** |  |  Yellow top (SST) tubeOr  Paediatric green top (lithium-heparin)Or  Paediatric orange top (lithium heparin)  |
| **Reference Range & Units** |  |

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| Patient group | Prolactin (mU/L) |
| Women – Pre Menopausal | 71 – 566 |
| Women – Post Menopausal | 58 – 416 |
| Males | <278 |

Reference: Beckman kit insertAll first occasion samples with prolactin levels above 700 mU/L will be screened for presence of Macroprolactin. |
| **Interferences** |  |  |
| **Interpretation & Clinical** **Decision Value (if applicable)** |  | Prolactin levels above 500 mU/L (if macroprolactin screen negative) or calculated monomeric prolactin levels above 500 mU/L (if macroprolactin screen positive) may be of pathological significance, but must be interpreted in the light of clinical details and drug therapy (see above). |
| **References** |  |  |
| **Test code** |  | PRL |
| **Lab Handling** |  | Analysed from primary tube and stored at 4°C. |