



# Prolactin

## Synonyms

## 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](#), especially neuroleptics, antiemetic's, SSRI's
- **Pituitary** - prolactinoma or other tumour causing stalk compression
- **Non-Pituitary** - PCOS, hypothyroidism, renal failure
- **Problems** - [Macroprolactin](#) (non-pathological increase in apparent prolactin)

## Part of Profile / See Also

### 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

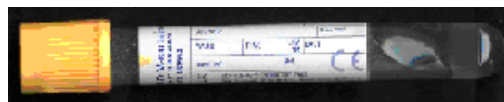
### Specimen Type

Serum

### Volume

2 ml

### Container



Yellow top (SST) tube



Or Paediatric green top (lithium-heparin)



Or Paediatric orange top (lithium heparin)

**Reference Range & Units**

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

Reference: Beckman kit insert

All 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.