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| **Rheumatoid Factor** | | | |
| **Synonyms** | |  | RhF, RAHA |
| **Clinical Indication** | |  | Rheumatoid factor (RF) is an autoantibody directed against the Fc portion of IgG that can be used as a marker of rheumatoid arthritis (RA). The most common and clinically useful class of RF is IgM, however there are also IgG and IgA forms. The test is indicated in investigation of Polyarthritis, RA, Connective Tissue Disease, Cryoglobulinaemia. |
| **Part of Profile / See Also** | |  |  |
| **Request Form** | |  | Combined Pathology manual Blood form or ICE request |
| **Availability / Frequency of Analysis** | |  | On request.  Minimum retesting interval is 7 years. |
| **Turnaround Time** | |  | Same day (Monday to Friday). |
| **Patient Preparation** | |  | None required. |
| **Sample Requirements** | |  |  |
|  | **Specimen Type** |  | Serum / Plasma |
|  | **Volume** |  | 0.5 ml |
|  | **Container** |  | Yellow top (SST) tube  Or  Paediatric green top (lithium-heparin)  Or  Paediatric orange top (lithium heparin) |
| **Reference Range & Units** | |  | 0-14 IU/mL.  Reference: Beckman method insert |
| **Interferences** | |  |  |
| **Interpretation & Clinical**  **Decision Value (if applicable)** | |  | RF is not diagnostic of RA since 2-10% of the normal population will have a positive result. 20-30% of patients with RA have no RF present, this is referred to as 'seronegative arthritis'. RF has been detected in patients with various connective tissue diseases such as Systemic Lupus Erythematosus (SLE) and Sjögren's syndrome, and also in the sera of patients with hypergammaglobulinaemic liver disease, syphilis, sarcoidosis and transiently following infection. Therefore, RA should not be relied upon as the only diagnostic tool and must be used in conjunction with other patient evidence. Referral to rheumatology should be based on clinical findings and not on the RF result.  RF has a 12 month minimum retesting interval. |
| **References** | |  | Protein Reference Unit Handbook of Clinical Immunochemistry. 9th Edition. 2007.  NICE NG100 Rheumatoid arthritis in adults: management 2018. |
| **Test code** | |  | RF |
| **Lab Handling** | |  | Analysed from primary tube and stored at 4°C. |