



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 Polyarthritits, 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

Lab Handling

Analysed from primary tube and stored at 4°C.