

# Albumin (Urine)



## Does this test have other names?

Urine albumin, 24-hour urine test for albumin

## What is this test?

This test looks for a protein called albumin in your urine. The test is used to check for kidney damage or disease.

Albumin is a protein in your blood. It helps keep the correct balance of fluid between your blood vessels and the body tissues they supply. The kidneys filter your blood to remove waste products. Ideally, the waste products end up in your urine, and albumin and other proteins stay in your blood vessels. So if albumin shows up in your urine, it may be a sign of kidney damage. But a better way to tell if you have kidney damage is to see how much albumin you lose in 24 hours.

## Why do I need this test?

You may have this test if your healthcare provider thinks you have kidney disease or if you have diabetes.

You may need to have this test again in 1 to 2 weeks. This is so your healthcare provider can see if your urine albumin level is rising.

## What other tests might I have along with this test?

Your healthcare provider might also do tests to check for other waste products in your blood. These include creatinine and urea nitrogen. If your kidneys are working the way they should, these waste products are removed from your blood.

You may have tests to see how much creatinine is in your urine. These tests help your healthcare provider figure out your urine albumin/creatinine ratio. This helps to screen for, diagnose, and monitor treatment for kidney disorders.

You may also have a test to figure out your glomerular filtration rate. Tiny blood vessels in the kidney, known as glomeruli, keep protein from seeping into your urine. If your glomeruli are damaged, more protein will seep into your urine.

## What do my test results mean?

Test results may vary depending on your age, gender, health history, and other things. Your test results may be different depending on the lab used. They may not mean you have a problem. Ask your healthcare provider what your test results mean for you.

A normal amount of albumin in your urine is less than 30 mg a day. A normal total protein amount in your urine is less than 150 mg a day.

If your test shows high levels of urine albumin, or a rise in urine albumin, it could mean you have kidney damage or disease.

If you have diabetes, one possible cause of an increased urine albumin is kidney disease (diabetic nephropathy).

## How is this test done?

This test requires a urine sample. You may be asked to give a urine specimen and your healthcare provider may test the sample using a test strip. Or your provider may want to use a 24-hour urine sample. For this type of sample, you must collect all the urine you make for 24 hours. Empty your bladder completely first thing in the morning without collecting it and note the time. Then collect your urine every time you go to the bathroom for the next 24 hours.

## Does this test pose any risks?

This test has no known risks.

## What might affect my test results?

Your test results might be affected if you:

- Have a urinary tract infection
- Are pregnant
- Are dehydrated
- Have a fever
- Have high blood pressure
- Have high blood sugar
- Have certain cancers such as bladder cancer
- Have certain kidney diseases like glomerulonephritis or a disease that affects the kidney like lupus

Certain medicines also can increase or decrease the amount of protein in your urine.

## How do I get ready for this test?

You don't need to prepare for this test. But be sure your healthcare provider knows about all medicines, herbs, vitamins, and supplements you are taking. This includes medicines that don't need a prescription and any illegal drugs you may use. If you are doing a 24-hour test, make sure you understand how to collect the sample. Ask if there are any foods you should not eat before or during the test.

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