

# Lipase



## Does this test have other names?

Serum lipase

## What is this test?

This test measures the amount of lipase in your blood. Lipase is an enzyme that is made by your pancreas. It helps your body digest fats.

Higher levels of lipase may mean you have a problem with your pancreas. Most often this means acute pancreatitis, or sudden inflammation of the pancreas.

## Why do I need this test?

You may need this test if your healthcare provider suspects that you have a pancreatic disorder. Signs and symptoms of acute pancreatitis include:

- Pain in the upper belly that may go to the back
- Nausea
- Vomiting
- Fast pulse
- Fever

You also may also have this test if you already have pancreatitis and are being treated. Your provider can use this test to see how well your treatment is working.

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

You may also need other blood tests. These include 1 to check your levels of amylase, another digestive enzyme that rises if you have pancreatitis.

You may also have an abdominal ultrasound, CT scan, or MRI, or a special MRI called a magnetic resonance cholangiopancreatography of your pancreas and bile ducts to look for gallstones or other abnormalities that sometimes occur with acute pancreatitis.

## What do my test results mean?

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

Results are given in units per liter (U/L). The normal range for adults younger than 60 is 10 to 140 U/L. Normal results for adults ages 60 and older is 24 to 151 U/L.

Higher than normal levels of lipase mean that you have a problem with your pancreas. If your blood has 3 to 10 times the normal level of lipase, then it's likely that you have acute pancreatitis.

High lipase levels also mean you may have kidney failure, cirrhosis, or a bowel problem.

## How is this test done?

The test is done with a blood sample. A needle is used to draw blood from a vein in your arm or hand.

## Does this test pose any risks?

Having a blood test with a needle carries some risks. These include bleeding, infection, bruising, and feeling lightheaded. When the needle pricks your arm or hand, you may feel a slight sting or pain. Afterward, the site may be sore.

## What might affect my test results?

Dialysis and a number of medicines can affect your test results.

## How do I get ready for this test?

You may need to stop eating or drinking anything except water for a certain amount of time before this test. Follow the directions given by your healthcare provider. Tell your healthcare provider 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.

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