

Cryoglobulin



Does this test have other names?

Cryocrit, cryoprotein

What is this test?

This test is done to find out if you have abnormal proteins called cryoglobulins in your blood.

Blood proteins include normal immunoglobulins (antibodies) such as IgG and IgM. But they can also include antibodies linked to autoimmune diseases. These abnormal blood proteins (cryoglobulins) are dissolved in your blood at the normal body temperature. But when you are in a cold environment, they may thicken and clump together. This limits the blood flow to your joints, muscles, and organs. This can lead to damage and inflammation of your blood vessels and tissues over time.

High levels of cryoglobulins may be a sign that your body is making abnormal proteins. This condition is seen with some autoimmune disorders and conditions, such as:

- Raynaud disease
- Systemic lupus erythematosus
- Rheumatoid arthritis
- Sjogren syndrome
- Leukemia
- Lymphoma

Why do I need this test?

You may need this test if your healthcare provider thinks that you have a problem with your blood proteins. Symptoms tend to happen in cold weather and include:

- Skin blueness
- Numbness or tingling
- Coldness in the fingers

In more severe cases, it can also cause joint pain or tissue damage.

What other tests might I have along with this test?

You may have a joint fluid analysis if your provider thinks that you have a systemic inflammatory disease, such as lupus or rheumatoid arthritis. You may have tests to measure blood levels of other antibodies, including:

- Antinuclear antibodies
- Antibodies to DNA
- Antibodies to phospholipids

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 negative test result means the antibodies in your blood stay dissolved even when the blood is chilled.

If you test positive for cryoglobulins, it means these proteins became visibly thickened when your blood sample was chilled. Your healthcare provider will do more tests to find out the cause.

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 has 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?

Other factors aren't likely to affect your results.

How do I get ready for this test?

You may need to not eat or drink anything but water for 8 hours before the test. 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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