

Albumin (Blood)



Does this test have other names?

ALB

What is this test?

This test measures the amount of the protein albumin in your blood.

Your liver makes albumin. Albumin carries substances such as hormones, medicines, and enzymes throughout your body.

This test can help diagnose, evaluate, and watch kidney and liver conditions. When your kidneys start to fail, albumin starts to leak into your urine. This causes a low albumin level in your blood.

Why do I need this test?

You may have this test if your healthcare provider suspects that you have liver or kidney disease. Symptoms of these diseases include:

- Yellowish skin (jaundice)
- Severe tiredness (fatigue)
- Weight loss
- Fever
- Vomiting and diarrhea
- Dark yellow urine or gray, pale stools
- Pain below the right ribs, including the stomach area
- Soreness below your right ribs

Other symptoms of kidney disease include:

- Swelling of your stomach and legs or around your eyes
- Shortness of breath
- Frequent need to urinate at night
- Nausea
- Itchy skin
- In men, an inability to get or maintain an erection (erectile dysfunction)

You may also have this test if you are on dialysis to help your healthcare provider find out how well treatment is working.

You may also have this test to check your nutritional status.

What other tests might I have along with this test?

Your healthcare provider may also order tests to measure other proteins in your blood. These include:

- Total protein
- Prealbumin
- Globulins
- Urine protein electrophoresis
- Serum protein electrophoresis

Your healthcare provider may also test your urine for albumin.

Your provider might also order tests that find what's causing inflammation if your blood albumin is low. These tests include:

- C-reactive protein, or CRP
- Alpha-1 acid
- Glycoprotein, or a1-AG
- Ferritin
- Ceruloplasmin

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.

Results are given in grams per deciliter (g/dL). A normal albumin range is 3.4 to 5.4 g/dL.

If you have a lower albumin level, you may have malnutrition. It can also mean that you have liver disease, kidney disease, or an inflammatory disease.

Higher albumin levels may be caused by acute infections, burns, and stress from surgery or a heart attack.

How is this test done?

The test requires a blood sample, which is drawn through a needle from a vein in your arm.

Does this test pose any risks?

Taking a blood sample with a needle carries risks that include bleeding, infection, bruising, or feeling dizzy. When the needle pricks your arm, you may feel a slight stinging sensation or pain. Afterward, the site may be slightly sore.

What might affect my test results?

Being dehydrated can cause higher albumin levels. Certain medicines can raise your albumin levels. These include insulin, steroids, and hormones.

If you are pregnant, your albumin levels may be lower. Medicines such as birth control pills may also lower your albumin levels.

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.

© 2000-2027 The StayWell Company, LLC. All rights reserved. This information is not intended as a substitute for professional medical care. Always follow your healthcare professional's instructions
This information is not intended as a substitute for professional medical care. Always follow your Healthcare professional's instructions. Copyright Krames LLC.