

Microalbumin (Urine)



Does this test have other names?

Urine microalbumin

What is this test?

This test looks for minuscule amounts of albumin in your urine.

Albumin is a protein needed for tissue growth and healing. It can leak into your urine when your kidneys aren't working as they should. The test can find out if diabetes has damaged your kidneys.

Because such small amounts of albumin may not show up during routine urine testing, healthcare providers use this test to look for changes in albumin levels that mean complications from diabetes or other conditions. If kidney disease is found early, it may be treated successfully.

Diabetes is the leading cause of kidney failure in the U.S. Early detection of kidney damage is important to prevent long-term complications.

People with diabetes should have a urine test for albumin when first diagnosed and then at least once a year after that.

If you have high blood pressure, talk with your healthcare provider about how often you should be tested.

Why do I need this test?

You may need this test if you have diabetes, and your healthcare provider wants to see whether you are controlling your blood sugar well enough to prevent damage to your kidneys. You may need to have this test once a year.

What other tests might I have along with this test?

Your healthcare provider may also order a urine test for creatinine. Creatinine is a chemical waste product created from the body's natural process of converting food into energy. The amount of albumin is measured against the amount of creatinine to find out the albumin-to-creatinine ratio, or ACR. If your kidneys are affected, your creatinine levels will rise.

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 for a 24-hour urine microalbumin test are given in milligrams per 24 hours (mg/24 hr). Results for ACR are given in milligrams per gram (mg/g). Normal results are:

- 24-hour microalbumin: Less than 30 mg/24 hr
- ACR: 0 to 30 mg/g

If your results show a small amount of albumin, you may have to repeat the test to confirm the results. A moderate amount of albumin could mean early stages of kidney disease, and it's likely your healthcare provider will need to adjust your treatment.

Finding microalbumin in your urine also may mean you are at a higher risk for heart disease.

Higher levels of microalbumin may also be caused by blood in your urine, a urinary tract infection, and an acid-base imbalance in your blood.

How is this test done?

This test is done with a urine sample. Your healthcare provider will give you a sterile container to collect a urine sample. You may have to give a urine sample at a specific time.

This test may also use a 24-hour urine sample. For this sample, you must collect all of your urine for 24 hours. Empty your bladder completely first in the morning without collecting it. Note the time. Then collect your urine every time you go to the bathroom over the next 24 hours.

Does this test pose any risks?

This test poses no known risks.

What might affect my test results?

Vigorous exercise can cause your results to seem higher than they really are. Certain medicines, such as oxytetracycline, can also affect your results.

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.

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