

Diabetes Autoantibody Panel



Does this test have other names?

Islet autoantibodies and diabetes mellitus autoantibody panel

What is this test?

This blood test checks for substances called antibodies. These are made by your body as it tries to fight off foreign substances such as germs. But sometimes, antibodies attack normal things in your body. This can include cells that make insulin and other chemicals related to insulin. Problems with insulin can lead to diabetes.

Your healthcare provider uses this test to find out if you have type 1 diabetes. Type 1 diabetes is more common in children, teens, and young adults. Type 2 diabetes is the most common type of diabetes. It can happen at any age but mostly occurs in adults.

The antibodies tested for are:

- Islet cell cytoplasmic autoantibodies (ICA)
- Glutamic acid decarboxylase autoantibodies (GADA)
- Insulinoma-associated-2 autoantibodies (IA-2A)
- Insulin autoantibodies (IAA)

If you have some combination of these antibodies in high levels, it could mean you have type 1 diabetes. Or it could mean you are at risk of developing it. These antibodies often show up years before symptoms begin. So this test is useful if you have a family history of type 1 diabetes.

People with type 2 diabetes don't have these antibodies, so the test is also useful to tell which type of diabetes a person has.

Why do I need this test?

You may need this blood test to confirm that you have type 1 diabetes.

What other tests might I have along with this test?

The diabetes antibody panel is just one test used to check for type 1 diabetes. Your healthcare provider may also order a C-peptide test or an insulin assay test.

Before having a diabetes antibody panel to find out if you have type 1 diabetes, you may have a random or fasting plasma glucose test. Or you may have an oral glucose tolerance test. A fasting plasma glucose test is a blood test done after you fast for 8 hours. In an oral glucose tolerance test, your blood is checked after you fast for a period of time and then drink a sugary solution. Many healthcare providers will also do a test called a hemoglobin A1C. This test gives an average of your blood sugar over 2 to 3 months.

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.

In general, if the antibodies are in your blood, you could have type 1 diabetes. Or you could be at risk of developing it. If the antibodies are not in your blood, you might have type 2 diabetes. But some people with type

1 diabetes will test negative for these antibodies.

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?

Taking insulin before the test will prevent an accurate result.

How do I get ready for this test?

You don't need to prepare for this test. 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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