

Name of the test:

LDL (Low Density Lipoprotein) test

Alternative name(s) of the test:

LDL-C test.

What this test is used for:

The test is used to measure the LDL levels in the blood. LDL is a lipoprotein, which is often called "bad cholesterol", because it can increase the risk of developing atherosclerosis and heart disease.

When the test is ordered:

The LDL test is ordered to evaluate the risk of developing cardiovascular disease. The test can be performed for screening in patients who have other known risk factors (family history of heart disease, age greater than 45 years old, obesity, smoking, etc.) and for monitoring the patients who are already undergoing the treatment for high cholesterol levels or heart disease.

How this test is performed:

A blood sample is needed for the test. It can be taken from a vein or from a fingertip.

How to prepare for the test:

Usually fasting is required several hours prior to the test. Some drugs can affect the test results, so consult with your doctor to learn the exact details about the preparation needed.

Interpretation of results:

High levels of LDL increase the risk of heart disease. It is important to evaluate other risk factors as well in order to correctly interpret the test results.