

**Name of the test**

Homocysteine

**What is this test used for?**

Homocysteine is an amino acid and this test can be used for measuring its level in the blood.

**When is the test ordered?**

This test may be ordered when it is suspected that a person has either vitamin B9 (folate) or vitamin B12 deficiency.

The homocysteine test can be also used to detect a disorder called homocystinuria. Homocystinuria is an inherited disease which leads to elevated levels of homocysteine.

**How is this test performed?**

A blood sample is taken from a vein.

**How to prepare for the test**

Normally, fasting for several hours (10-12 hours) is required before taking a blood sample for this test. Some medications and dietary supplements may also affect the test results, so it is essential to first consult a doctor and receive specific instructions on any test preparation needed.

**Interpretation of results**

The test results should be interpreted by a doctor.

In general, many factors may affect homocysteine levels. For example, homocysteine level may be high if a person has vitamin B9 (folate) or vitamin B12 deficiency. Homocystinuria can also be a reason for elevated homocysteine levels.

It should be noted that homocysteine levels might be affected by age, smoking and diet.

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**References:**

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