

Understanding Blood-Based Biomarker Tests for Alzheimer's Disease

Information for People with Memory Concerns

Why am I being offered this blood test?

If you or someone you know is experiencing changes in memory or having trouble thinking, your healthcare provider may suggest a blood-based biomarker test. This test can help doctors understand whether changes often linked to Alzheimer's may be playing a role and what steps to take next.

What are blood-based biomarkers?

Blood-based biomarkers (BBMs) examine proteins in the blood that can give doctors clues about changes happening in your brain. With Alzheimer's disease, certain proteins associated with Alzheimer's disease, called amyloid plaques and tau tangles, may be present at higher levels.

These tests can help answer an important question:
"Could Alzheimer 's-related changes be causing problems with memory?"

Important to Know

- These tests alone do NOT diagnose Alzheimer's disease.
- These tests can help guide next steps in care.
- These tests may help determine whether additional testing is needed.
- These tests may help get the right help, faster.

What can the results tell doctors?

If the result is **"low" or "negative"** for amyloid plaque	This means the memory or thinking issues you are experiencing at this time are **less likely** to be related to Alzheimer's disease.
If the result is **"elevated" or "positive"** for amyloid plaque	This means the memory or thinking issues you are experiencing at this time are **more likely** to be related to Alzheimer's disease.

Why not just do a more extensive test right away?

For evaluation of suspected Alzheimer's disease, you may undergo more extensive assessments like a MRI (Magnetic Resonance Imaging) or PET (Positron Emission Tomography) scan of your brain, or collection of cerebrospinal fluid (CSF) done via a lumbar puncture (spinal tap) to collect fluid that surrounds the brain, to look at changes in the structure of the brain or to test for the amyloid or tau proteins associated with Alzheimer's disease.

Advanced tests such as PET or CSF testing can be more expensive, more invasive, difficult to schedule, and importantly, may not be necessary for everyone. The blood-based biomarker tests being offered can be done in a provider's office and as such, may help identify who would benefit from further evaluation so care can be faster and more personalized.

Before your blood test

Tell your provider if you take a high-dose biotin (vitamin B7) supplement. You may be asked to stop biotin supplements 72 hours before you take the blood test.

How can I explain this to my friends & family?

"This blood test doesn't diagnose Alzheimer's by itself. It helps my doctor understand whether my memory and thinking issues or concerns are related to Alzheimer's disease-type changes might be contributing and whether we should take the next step."

Many conditions can affect memory, and not all memory problems are caused by Alzheimer's disease. This test is one tool to help you and your care team make informed decisions and to help your care team focus on your needs.

Notes: