

Estrogen

Estrogens are a group of steroids that play a key role in bone and reproductive health. In women, estrogens are responsible for the development and function of reproductive organs, as well as the formation of secondary sex characteristics. Although considered the main sex hormones for women, they are also found in men and play a role in bone metabolism and growth in both sexes.

Estrogen consists of three forms of the hormone, estrone (E1), estradiol (E2), and estriol (E3). These three estrogens are secreted by the adrenal glands, gonads and placenta (in women who are pregnant). This test measures the total estrogens to provide an overall picture of estrogen status and are a major indicator in evaluating reproductive health, as well as hormonal disease states.

Why should you get tested?

For women, testing may be needed for the following situations:

- Abnormal vaginal bleeding
- Unusual sex organ development
- Having menopause symptoms
- Lack of menstrual periods
- Undergoing infertility treatment
- Monitoring placenta health

For men, testing may be needed if showing signs of feminization, such as enlarged breasts.

What should I do if the results are abnormal?

It is always recommended you meet with a healthcare provider to determine what your laboratory test results mean to you. Your healthcare provider will review all of your test results and, combined with your health history, will be able to provide an accurate course of action.

Estrogen results can depend upon the sex and age of the person being tested. For women it also depends upon your menstrual cycle or whether or not you are pregnant.

If your results were high: High levels of could mean early puberty in girls or tumors in the ovaries in girls and women. For boys and men, it could signal delayed puberty, tumors in the testicles and may be the cause of gynecomastia (enlargement in breast tissue). For both men and women, high levels could mean:

- Hyperthyroidism
- Cirrhosis (liver damage)
- Tumors in the adrenal glands

If your results were low: Low estrogen levels in women are signs of several conditions, including:

- Poorly functioning ovaries
- Low levels of pituitary hormones
- An eating disorder
- Turner syndrome (inherited condition caused by an abnormal or missing X chromosome)
- Failing pregnancy

Low estradiol levels also happen naturally after menopause occurs in women.

As with any abnormal lab test, it's important that you discuss your results with your healthcare provider.

What other resources are available to learn more about my health and laboratory tests?

- Lab Tests Online: labtestsonline.org
- WebMD: webmd.com

DLO Direct offers direct access to laboratory testing for informational purposes. A DLO Direct lab test result is not a medical diagnosis and is not intended as medical advice. Only a healthcare provider can interpret lab results and diagnose a medical condition or disease.

Because tests have not been ordered by a healthcare provider, third party entities, including Medicare and Medicaid, will not reimburse for these tests.



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