

# Follicle-Stimulating Hormone (FSH)

Follicle-stimulating hormone (FSH) is associated with reproduction and the development of eggs in women and sperm in men. FSH is made by the pituitary gland, which is a small organ located behind the sinus cavity in the center of the head at the base of the brain. This test measures the amount of FSH in the blood.

## Why should you get tested?

Checking your FSH is used to evaluate fertility issues, the health of your reproductive organs (ovaries or testes), or your pituitary function. Testing for children can be used to evaluate early or delayed puberty.

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

- Difficulty getting pregnant
- Irregular or no menstrual periods

For men, testing may be needed if showing signs of the following:

- Low sperm count
- Low muscle mass
- Decreased sex drive

## 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.

FSH results can depend upon the sex and age of the person being tested. For women it also depends upon your menstrual cycle.

**If your results were high:** In women, high levels could mean:

- Loss of ovarian function
- Menopause
- Turner syndrome (inherited condition caused by an abnormal or missing X chromosome)
- Polycystic ovarian syndrome where a woman's hormones are out of balance causing ovarian cysts

In men, high FSH values may indicate:

- Testicles are not functioning properly or have been damaged by a disease such as alcohol dependence, or treatments such as X-rays, radiation or chemotherapy
- Klinefelter's syndrome (rare condition caused by an extra X chromosome)

**If your results were low:** Low FSH levels in women and men may indicate:

- No egg production (women)
- No/low sperm production (men)
- Pituitary gland isn't functioning properly

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](http://labtestsonline.org)
- Healthline: [healthline.com](http://healthline.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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