

# Pregnancy Test Qualitative - Serum

A qualitative blood pregnancy test provides confirmation of the presence of the pregnancy hormone called human chorionic gonadotropin (hCG). HCG is a hormone produced by the placenta during pregnancy. Production of hCG increases steadily during the first trimester (8-10 weeks) of a normal pregnancy, peaking around the tenth week after the last menstrual cycle.

## Is a blood test better than a urine test in a home pregnancy kit?

Early in pregnancy, the level of hCG increases in the blood and is eliminated in the urine. A pregnancy test detects hCG in the blood or urine and confirms or rules out pregnancy. While blood tests and urine tests both check for levels of hCG, in general, blood tests are more sensitive than urine tests and can be done two days before a woman would expect her period to start.

## When should I have a pregnancy test?

For confirming pregnancy, the timing of testing depends on how accurate a woman is about the day she expects her menstrual period. While a blood hCG test can be done two days before a woman would expect her period to start, it is most reliable by 10 days after a missed menstrual period.

## What should I do with my results?

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.

**If your results were positive:** If the result is 5 mIU/ml or greater, the test is considered positive for pregnancy and means you are likely pregnant. You should schedule an appointment with your healthcare provider to discuss additional testing and treatment immediately.

**If your results were negative:** If the blood pregnancy test reveals your hCG level is under 5 mIU/ml, then the test will be considered negative. A negative hCG result means that it is unlikely you're pregnant. However, tests performed too early in a pregnancy, before there is a significant hCG level, may give false-negative results. The test may be repeated a few days later if there is a strong possibility of pregnancy.

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

- Lab Tests Online: [labtestsonline.org](http://labtestsonline.org)
- WebMD: [webmd.com](http://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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