

T4, Free

One of the two major hormones produced by the thyroid gland is thyroxine (T4). The other hormone is called triiodothyronine (T3) and together they help control the rate at which the body uses energy. Almost all of the T4 and T3 in the blood is bound to protein. This test measures T4 not bound to thyroid hormone-binding proteins.

How is the test used?

A free thyroxine (free T4) test is used to help evaluate thyroid function and diagnose thyroid diseases, including hyperthyroidism and hypothyroidism.

What are the symptoms of hyperthyroidism?

A person with elevated levels of T4 and T3 hormones may exhibit one or more of the following symptoms:

- Rapid heart rate
- Hand tremors
- Nervousness
- Difficulty sleeping
- Weight loss
- Irritated eyes

What are the symptoms of hypothyroidism?

A person with low levels of T4 and T3 hormones may exhibit one or more of the following symptoms:

- Weight gain
- Constipation
- Dry skin
- Cold intolerance
- Fatigue
- Hair loss

What should I do if the results are abnormal or out of range?

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 high: If your results were abnormally high, it may indicate an overactive thyroid gland.

If your results were low: If your results were abnormally low, it may indicate an underactive thyroid gland.

Whether your results are high or low, an abnormal T4 indicates an excess or deficiency in the amount of free thyroxine available to the body, but it does not indicate the reason. As with any abnormal results, 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?

- American Thyroid Association: thyroid.org
- 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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