

Alpha Health

FREE GUIDE

The Men's Bloodwork Guide

What your numbers actually mean — and the questions to take to your doctor.

Plain English · No jargon · No agenda

An independent men's health resource

You're not imagining it — and you don't have to figure it out alone

If you've been feeling flat, tired, foggy or unmotivated, your blood results can hold real clues. The problem is most men are handed a page of numbers with "everything's normal" and no explanation — or they end up piecing together theories from forums at midnight.

This guide does one thing: it explains, in plain English, the markers worth understanding and what each one is actually telling you. It won't diagnose you or tell you what to take — that's your doctor's job. What it will do is help you walk into that appointment informed, asking the right questions, instead of being brushed off.

How to use this guide

- Read it before you get your bloods done, so you know what to look at.
- Use the "what to ask your doctor" prompts under each marker.
- Bring the checklist on the last page to your appointment.
- Remember: numbers are only half the picture — your symptoms and lifestyle matter just as much.

Important — please read

This guide is general health education only. It is **not** medical advice, diagnosis or treatment, and it does not recommend or refer to any specific medication. Reference ranges vary between labs and individuals, and "normal" is not the same as "optimal for you." Always discuss your results with a qualified doctor, who is the only person who can interpret them for your situation and decide on any treatment.

STEP ONE

Before you test: getting it right

A blood test is only as useful as the conditions it's taken under. A few simple things make your results far more meaningful and comparable over time.

Test in the morning

Several hormones, especially Testosterone and Cortisol follow a daily rhythm and peak in the morning. Aim for a sample within 2 hours of your normal waking time for an accurate reading.

Fast beforehand

Fasting (12 hours is best, water only) gives accurate glucose, insulin, and lipid results. These markers fluctuate dramatically after food intake, thus being fasted removes the variability in levels.

Be consistent

Test under the same conditions each time (time of day, fasted, similar sleep and training) so you're comparing like with like.

Mention recent factors

Heavy training, illness, poor sleep, alcohol or big stress in the days before can all move your numbers. Note them so they can be taken into account.

Where to get tested

You can ask your GP to order a panel, or use a direct-to-consumer pathology service where you order your own tests. Either way, keep a copy of every result. One of the most valuable aspects of blood work is tracking trends over time. This is one of the most influential things you can do for your health!

Hormone & related markers

What each one measures, why it matters, and what to raise with your doctor.

Total Testosterone

The headline number, the total amount of testosterone in your blood. It's influenced by age, sleep, body fat, stress, supplements, illness and the time of day you test.

Ask your doctor: is this result related to my symptoms, and should it be repeated (morning, fasted) to confirm? Would I benefit from meeting with an endocrinologist?

Free Testosterone

This number indicates the amount of testosterone freely circulating, not bound to carrier proteins. Testosterone balance is delicate, and the ratio of Total to Free Testosterone provides an insight into Testosterone metabolism, transport and utilisation

Ask your doctor: how does my free level compare to my total, and what does that suggest?

SHBG

The protein that binds testosterone. High SHBG can leave less free testosterone available; low SHBG the opposite. It's affected by thyroid, insulin/blood sugar and liver health.

Ask your doctor: is my SHBG affecting how much testosterone is actually available to me?

LH & FSH

Signalling hormones from the pituitary gland. They help a doctor work out where a hormone issue might originate — the testes themselves, or the brain/pituitary that signals them.

Ask your doctor: do my LH and FSH point to where the issue is coming from?

Oestradiol (E2)

Yes, men need some oestrogen too, it contributes to libido, mood, bone density and body composition. It's about balance, not simply "high" or "low", but the relationship between Oestradiol and other hormones.

Ask your doctor: Is my oestradiol in healthy balance with my other hormones

Prolactin

A pituitary hormone that, when elevated, can affect libido and other hormones. Worth checking as part of a full picture.

Ask your doctor: should prolactin be investigated further given my symptoms?

Metabolic & general health markers

These shape how you feel day to day — and they interact with your hormones more than most men realise.

HbA1c & fasting glucose

Your blood-sugar control over recent months. Insulin resistance and high blood sugar destroy energy levels and are tightly linked to hormone and metabolic health. HbA1c provides an average of your sugar levels, while glucose provides a snapshot on the day. Together providing integral information on overall metabolic health.

Ask your doctor: do these suggest I am insulin resistant?

Full blood count

A broad picture of your red and white cells. Haematocrit, how much of your blood is carrying oxygen, and how is this impacting viscosity (Thickness). Are there any signs of infection, inflammation, auto-immunity, or anaemia?

Ask your doctor: Am I anaemic? Do I have “thick blood”? Is my immune system functioning appropriately?

Lipids/Cholesterol (HDL, LDL, Triglycerides, ApoB)

Your cardiometabolic markers, which are used in determining risk of cardiovascular disease, heart attacks, and strokes. An important area to focus on when aiming for optimal health and longevity

Ask your doctor: What cholesterol markers can I improve to lower risk of cardiovascular disease?

Vitamin D, Ferritin and Iron

Common, fixable causes of fatigue and low mood. Low vitamin D and low iron stores (ferritin) can mimic or worsen many “low energy” symptoms. Furthermore, Ferritin provides information regarding the level of inflammation in your body.

Ask your doctor: Are my vitamin D levels adequate? Could my high Ferritin be indicative of inflammation?

Thyroid

An underactive thyroid can produce fatigue, weight gain, low mood and brain fog. Symptoms are easily mistaken for something else. Always worth ruling in or out.

Ask your doctor: could my thyroid be contributing to how I feel? Is it possible I have sub-clinical hypothyroid?

Liver and Kidney function + PSA

Baseline organ-health markers that give important context. For older men, a PSA reading is a useful prostate baseline to discuss.

Ask your doctor: are my organ-function baselines healthy, and is PSA relevant for my age? Are there any trends over time that I need to be aware of?

What the numbers don't tell you

Bloods are only half the picture. For most men, how they feel is driven as much by daily habits as by any single marker. These are the levers you control today, often with bigger effects than you'd expect.

Sleep

The single biggest lever for hormones, energy and mood. Poor sleep alone can suppress Testosterone to deficient levels!

Resistance training

Lifting weights supports hormones, body composition, mood and insulin sensitivity.

Body composition

Excess body fat, especially around the middle, works against healthy hormone balance.

Nutrition

Enough protein, whole foods and adequate micronutrients underpin everything else.

Alcohol & stress

Both quietly drag on hormones, sleep and recovery when they pile up. There is no healthy amount of alcohol

Medications

Some everyday medicines can affect your levels, and are known to disrupt your hormones. It is worth reviewing with your doctor.

The honest truth

Many men feel dramatically better by fixing sleep, training, nutrition and stress before anything else. Start there while you investigate the rest. It's not the exciting answer, but it is the most honest.

Questions to ask your doctor

Are my results actually in context with the symptoms I'm experiencing?

- ✓ Should any results be repeated under proper conditions (morning, fasted) to confirm?
- ✓ What might be driving how I'm feeling — and what's the most likely cause?
- ✓ Are there lifestyle or other factors we should address first?
- ✓ Do any markers need further investigation or referral to a specialist?
- ✓ What would you want to re-test, and when, to track progress?

When to see a doctor sooner rather than later

Please book a proper medical appointment and don't rely on a guide like this if you're experiencing things such as:

- Significant or worsening fatigue, low mood or loss of interest in life
- Dramatic weight loss without trying
- Chest pain, breathlessness, or other concerning physical symptoms
- Any thoughts of harming yourself
- Symptoms that are getting worse, or simply worrying you

If you're in distress and need to talk to someone in Australia, you can call Lifeline on 13 11 14 at any time.

Want someone independent to walk you through your own results?

Understanding the markers is one thing, making sense of your numbers, in the context of your symptoms and goals, is another. That's exactly what an independent review is for.

In a one-to-one session, we'll go through your bloodwork in plain English, talk through the lifestyle factors at play, and make sure you know precisely what to take to your doctor. No medication sold. No pressure. Just clarity from someone whose only job is to help you understand.

Book an Independent Blood & Health Review

Bring your recent bloods (or we'll point you to the right panel), and get an honest, expert read before you make any decisions. Visit our website to book a time that suits you.

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