



Understanding your pet's blood work...

"CBC, Chem Panel, stat!" This may sound familiar if you watch such popular television dramas as House, ER, and Emergency Vets. But do you know what the terms mean? Blood tests help doctors determine causes of illness accurately, safely, and quickly and let us monitor the progress of medical treatments. To help you understand your pet's test results, this guide explains common tests and indices pertinent to animal health.

Complete blood count (CBC) - This is the most common blood test performed on pets and people. A CBC gives information on hydration status, anemia, infection, the blood's clotting ability, and the ability of the immune system to respond. This test is essential for pets with fevers, vomiting, diarrhea, weakness, pale gums, or loss of appetite. If your pet needs surgery, a CBC can detect bleeding disorders or other unseen abnormalities.

HCT (Hematocrit)-measures the percentage of red blood cells to detect anemia and dehydration.

Hb or MCHC (Hemoglobin and mean corpuscular hemoglobin concentration) - are the oxygen-carrying pigments of red blood cells.

WBC (White blood cell count)-measures the body's immune cells. Increases or decreases indicate certain disease or infections.

Lymphocytes/ Monocytes/ Neutrophils - are specific types of white blood cells

PTL(Platelet count)- type of blood element that is involved in the clotting process.

Blood Chemistries- These common blood serum tests help evaluate organ function, electrolyte status, hormone levels, and more. They are important in evaluating older pets, pets with vomiting and diarrhea or toxin exposure, pets receiving long-term medications, and health before anesthesia.

ALB (Albumin)-is serum protein that helps evaluate hydration, hemorrhage, and intestinal, liver, and kidney disease.

ALKP (Alkaline Phosphatase) - elevations may indicate liver damage, Cushing's disease, and active bone growth in young pets.

ALT (Alanine Aminotransferase) - is a sensitive indicator of active liver damage.

AMYL (Amylase) - elevations can occur with pancreatitis but, not always.

BUN (Blood Urea Nitrogen) - assesses kidney function. An increased blood level is called azotemia and can be caused by kidney, liver, heart disease, urethral obstruction shock, and dehydration.

Ca (Calcium) - deviations can indicate a variety of diseases. Tumors, hyperparathyroidism, kidney disease, and low albumin are just a few of the conditions that alter serum calcium.

CHOL (Cholesterol) - is used to supplement diagnosis of hypothyroidism, liver disease, Cushing's disease, and diabetes mellitus.

CREA (Creatinine) - assesses kidney function. This test helps distinguish between kidney and non-kidney elevations of BUN.

GLOB (Globulin) - is a blood protein that can be abnormal with chronic inflammation and certain gastrointestinal disorders.

GLU (Glucose) - is a blood sugar. Elevated levels may indicate diabetes mellitus. Low levels can cause collapse, seizures, or coma.