

Estimated Glomerular Filtration Rate (eGFR)

A measure of your kidney function.



WHAT IS AN EGFR?

eGFR stands for estimated Glomerular Filtration Rate. Your kidneys have tiny filters called glomeruli that filter waste products from your blood. Blood cells and proteins from your blood can also pass through your kidneys and into your urine. The amount of blood that is filtered per minute is referred to as the rate.

In a healthy person, there are some products that should be expelled from the body in your urine and other products that should stay in the blood. When your kidneys are damaged and/or not functioning properly this process can be affected.

Creatinine is one of the waste products in your blood that is removed by the kidneys and passed out in your urine. If your kidneys aren't functioning properly, creatinine remains in your blood. Therefore when you have a blood test, the levels of creatinine in your blood will be higher.

It is hard to work out the exact rate at which your kidneys are filtering your blood. A formula has been developed that takes into account your age, gender and the amount of creatinine in your blood to estimate a filtration rate (eGFR).

WHY ARE YOU HAVING THIS TEST?

This test helps your doctor work out how well your kidneys are working. Your doctor may also order some other tests to confirm any results that indicate kidney malfunction.

Identifying kidney damage early and beginning treatment can stop or slow the progression of kidney disease.

If you have established conditions such as chronic kidney disease or diabetes, your doctor might use this test to check how well your treatments are working and monitor your progress.

WHAT DO THE RESULTS MEAN?

eGFR is reported in millilitres per minute (mL/min) and is written as "mL/min/1.73m²". The "1.73m²" relates to body surface area.

A normal result in a young adult is above 90 mL/min/1.73m². A normal result means that kidney disease is less likely.

If your result is above 60 mL/min/1.73m², and you have no other signs of kidney damage, your kidney function is still considered normal.

If your doctor has performed urine tests which were abnormal, and your eGFR is between 60 and 90 mL/min/1.73m², you may still be diagnosed with kidney damage, even though your eGFR appears normal. Sometimes in the early stages of kidney damage (especially if you have diabetes), urine tests (such as a microalbumin test) might pick up kidney damage before abnormal eGFR results are seen.

A low value (below 60) indicates that some kidney damage has occurred. Your doctor will most likely confirm this result with a repeat blood test. Most severe kidney damage leads to progressively lower eGFR values. This test may not be suitable for children and during pregnancy.

HOW OFTEN SHOULD YOU BE TESTED?

Your doctor will decide how often you will need to be tested. You may be tested annually or more frequently if you have an established condition such as chronic kidney disease or diabetes.

ARE THERE FEES FOR THIS TEST?

This test is bulk-billed subject to Medicare guidelines and criteria being met. If Medicare guidelines and criteria are not met, an out-of-pocket fee may apply

For further information, please speak with your doctor.

REFERENCES

Kidney Health Australia Fact Sheet:
"Estimated Glomerular Filtration Rate (eGFR)"

Lab Tests Online
www.labtestsonline.org.au

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