

## UOA MS

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**Patient Name:**

**Special Instructions:**

**Follow Up:**

# Alpha-Fetoprotein

Alpha-Fetoprotein (AFP) is a protein made by the fetal liver. It is normally elevated in the newborn and the mother. In the infant, the value falls to adult values (normally less than 20 ng/ml (nanograms per milliliter) by one year of age. This protein is found in a number of abnormal tumors and conditions. It can be used for a screening test when this is appropriate.

## PREPARATION FOR TEST

No preparation or fasting is required.

## ELEVATIONS OF AFP ARE CAUSED BY:

- Primary hepatocellular *carcinoma* (cancer of the liver) and the level correlates with tumor size.
- A screening test for embryonic teratocarcinomas, *hepatoblastomas* (tumor of the liver).
- Rarely hepatic *metastases* (cancer spread) from the GI tract.
- Some cholangiocarcinomas cause elevations greater than 400 ng/ml.
- Rapidly progressing hepatitis can produce levels of AFP in excess of 1000ng/ml.
- Lesser levels of *hepatitis* (inflammation of the liver) can produce levels of 100 to 400 ng/ml.

## NORMAL FINDINGS

- Adult: Less than 40 ng/mL or Less than 40 mg/L (SI units).
- Child younger than 1 year: Less than 30ng/mL.

Ranges are stratified by weeks of gestation and vary among laboratories.

Ranges for normal findings may vary among different laboratories and hospitals. You should always check with your doctor after having lab work or other tests done to discuss the meaning of your test results and whether your values are considered within normal limits.

## MEANING OF TEST

Your caregiver will go over the test results with you and discuss the importance and meaning of your results, as well as treatment options and the need for additional tests if necessary.

## **OBTAINING THE TEST RESULTS**

It is your responsibility to obtain your test results. Ask the lab or department performing the test when and how you will get your results.

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