

Prostate-Specific Antigen Blood Test

What is a Prostate-Specific Antigen Blood Test?

Prostate-Specific Antigen (PSA) is a protein made in the prostate gland. A PSA test is a simple blood test that measures the level of PSA in your blood. It can provide valuable information to assess and monitor prostate conditions and prostate cancer.

Why would I need a Prostate-Specific Antigen Blood Test?

A PSA test is the primary method of risk assessment for prostate cancer in Australia. Your doctor may recommend a PSA test to:

- Assess the risk of prostate cancer
- Investigate urinary symptoms (such as slow flow or frequent urination).
- Monitor prostate conditions, including prostate cancer or benign prostate enlargement.

What happens during a Prostate-Specific Antigen Blood Test?

You will be asked to sit or lie down. A tourniquet (tight band) is placed around your upper arm to make your veins more visible. The inside of your elbow will be cleaned with a mild antiseptic. With a small sting or pinch, a sample of blood will be drawn into collection tubes. You will be asked to remain sitting or lying down for 1-5 minutes after the test to avoid dizziness. The blood samples will be transported to a pathology collection centre. A blood work report will be forwarded to your referring doctor.



How do I prepare for a Prostate-Specific Antigen Blood Test?

Avoid ejaculation and vigorous exercise (such as cycling) for two days before the test.

We advise that you wear loose fitting clothing which will allow a tourniquet to be placed on your upper arm (we suggest getting it fitted on your non-dominant arm).

What are the risks with a Prostate-Specific Antigen Blood Test?

The PSA test may identify slow-growing cancers that would not have caused harm, which can result in additional treatment, increased anxiety and possible physical side effects – a situation referred to as overdiagnosis. Further tests may have side effects.

Pressure from the tourniquet may be uncomfortable for some.