

Understanding My CA 125 Test Results

For gynecology oncology patients

Read this pamphlet to learn more about:

- Why you are having a CA 125 test
- How to understand your test results
- What to do if you have questions

What is a CA 125 test?

CA 125 is a blood test. CA 125 stands for “Cancer Antigen 125”. It measures how much CA 125 protein is in your blood. The CA 125 protein is released into your blood by abnormal cells such as cancer cells. You may also have the CA 125 protein when you have an infection or inflammation.

The technician takes a sample of your blood from your arm, a PICC line or Port-a-Cath (in your chest), like other blood tests.

Why is my oncologist ordering this test?

If you had cancer, the CA 125 test can check how you are responding to your cancer treatment.

Your doctor will look at your symptoms and use the results from your CA 125 test, your radiology scans (CT scans) and clinic examination to decide what to do next.



How do I prepare for the test?

You do not need to do anything to prepare for this blood test. You can eat and drink normally.

What happens after my blood test?

Your blood test will be sent to the lab. It will take up to 24 – 48 hours for the results to be ready.

How do I get my blood test results?

You can see your results online by signing up for your www.myuhn.ca. Your doctor will explain the results to you at your next clinic appointment.

How do I interpret my test results for certain types of ovarian cancer?

The normal range of a CA 125 is **less than 35**.

If your CA 125 is higher than 35, your doctor will consider your symptoms, the results from your scans (such as CT scan) if you had them done and your clinic examination. Your doctor will then talk with you about possible treatments and next steps.

- The normal range of a CA 125 test may be different in other labs.
- The CA 125 test is not a screening test. **If your result is high it does NOT mean you have cancer.**

What do I do if I have symptoms and my CA 125 is normal?

- Call your nurse or your oncologist at: 416 946 2220 Press #2 for the nursing line.
- Keep a diary of your symptoms. You can bring this with you to your next clinic visit and ask any questions you may have.

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