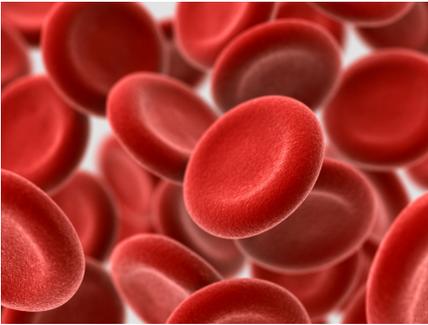


What the Pitt Men's Study Tests and What Your Results Mean

Many of our volunteers undergo numerous and varied tests at their Pitt Men's Study visit. While this is not a complete list of the tests each and every volunteer will receive, it is an attempt to list and explain the core tests that we conduct.

Blood



Roughly one-third of the blood we take from our volunteers is refrigerated and stored for posterity. Some of this is saved at Pitt, the rest is sent to a federal repository in Maryland managed by the National Institutes of Health. Researchers in the Multicenter AIDS Cohort Study can analyze this blood later. If, for instance, a gene has been discovered to possibly allow people to live longer with HIV, the researchers can look at the stored blood and determine whether the MACS volunteers who have that gene have indeed lived longer with HIV than people who don't carry the gene. Our serum repository has contributed much to research over the years, including helping to verify the link between human herpes virus 8 and Kaposi's sarcoma.

The other two-thirds of the blood goes for immediate testing, both in our lab and at Quest Diagnostics. We perform viral load tests on our HIV-positive volunteers and ELISA test for our HIV-negative volunteers. Everyone gets a cholesterol screening, hepatitis screenings, liver enzyme tests, and basic levels of red and white blood cells, platelets, and hemoglobin tests.

Here is a rundown of the tests results you will receive in the mail after your visit, along with a brief explanation of each:

CMP (Complete Metabolic Panel)

Checks electrolytes, glucose (blood sugar), kidney function, liver function, proteins in the blood.

CBC (Complete Blood Count)

Looks for signs of infection, anemia, bleeding disorders.

Hemoglobin A1C

Looks at how much sugar has been in the blood over a 3 month period. This measures someone's risk for diabetes as well as monitors known diabetics.

Hepatitis is an infection of the liver caused by a virus. All 3 types of Hepatitis may be transmitted through sexual contact, but the risk of transmitting Hep C this way is lower than the other 2 types.

Hepatitis A – transmitted through feces, or contaminated food/water (a vaccine is available)

Hepatitis B – transmitted through blood, semen, other body fluids (a vaccine is available)

Hepatitis C – transmitted through blood (no vaccine is available)

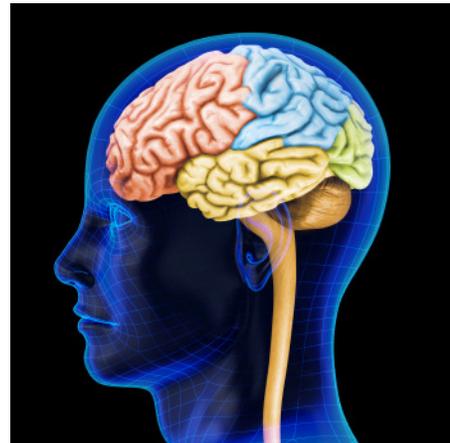
Slight variations may occur. We will indicate whether your results are normal or abnormal.

Urine

We currently collect two urine specimens from our volunteers. One is tested at Quest Diagnostics and checks for kidney function and hydration status (you will receive this result in the mail with your blood test results). The other specimen is frozen and kept in a repository.

Neuropsychological Tests

We do the trailmaking and symbol digit tests with you at every visit. Every four visits, we conduct the full battery of neuropsychological tests. We will often let you know whether the results were normal or abnormal immediately following the more extensive testing, but if we are unable to give you your results at your appointment you may call in to receive them at a later date.



Below is an explanation of what each test looks at:

Trailmaking A & B (i.e. connecting the dots, alternating numbers and letters) - measures attention, visual searching, mental processing speed, & the ability to mentally control simultaneous stimulus patterns. These are sensitive to global brain status but not too sensitive to minor brain injuries.

Symbol Digit Test (i.e. matching numbers with symbols) – assesses motor speed, incidental learning, & scanning ability. Used as a screening test to detect cognitive impairment. Includes an immediate recall.

RAVLT (Rey Auditory Verbal Learning Test) – evaluates the ability to learn a list of words over a series of 5 trials. Includes a recall of this list after hearing an interference list & then again after a longer delay (~ 20 min)

Rey Complex Figure – examines the ability to construct a complex figure & remember it for later recall (immediate & delayed) & it measures visual-motor organization.

Stroop Test (i.e. red, blue, green, green, red, blue...) – examines attention, mental speed, & mental control

Grooved Pegboard – measures performance speed in a fine motor task. By using both sides of the body, inferences may be drawn regarding possible lateral brain damage.

CALCAP (California Computerized Assessment Package) – assesses reaction times, speed of information processing, rapid visual scanning, form discrimination, brief memory & divided attention.