

Learning About Your Blood Test

You may have a blood test for lots of different reasons, such as finding the cause of symptoms like fatigue or weakness... or checking for certain health problems.

A blood test is a quick, simple procedure.

But even so, it can be a little stressful, especially if it's been a while.

It might help if you know what to expect, so you can be prepared.

Here's how the test is done.

Most of the time, blood tests are done using a sample from a vein in the arm.

A nurse or other health professional wraps a stretchy band around your upper arm, then cleans a small area—usually the inner part of the elbow—with alcohol.

Then, as gently as possible, the nurse pokes a needle into a vein in the arm.

You will feel a small, quick pinch.

After the poke, blood will fill a small tube that's attached to the needle.

Sometimes more than one tube is filled, so the blood can be used for more than one test.

The stretchy band will be taken off your arm.

The nurse will put gauze on the site—with some gentle pressure—and then tape it or wrap a bandage over it.

And that's it.

A blood test doesn't take long.

If you're feeling nervous, know that it'll be over quickly.