

RUCHI GURNANI · NUTRITIONIST

Read your own blood report



Every line on an Indian health check-up, what the number means, what food fixes it, and when it is a doctor's job. For you, and for your parents.

Swipe 👉

Read this first

Every line on a report has **three columns**: the test, your number, and the lab's normal range. The range is printed right there. Most people never look at it.

One number a little outside the range is not a diagnosis. A **pattern** is. High sugar with high triglycerides and a high SGPT is one story, not three.

Your lab may print slightly different ranges from the ones here. **The lab's range wins.**

THIS IS NOT A DOCTOR

Reading a report is your right. Treating it is a doctor's job. This guide tells you which lines need one, how soon, and what your plate can do in the meantime.

1

BLOOD COUNT · CBC

- HAEMOGLOBIN** Carries oxygen. Under 12 for women, under 13 for men is anaemia. This is the line behind tiredness, breathlessness on stairs, pale lips and hair fall. Under 8, a doctor this week.
- MCV** The size of your red cells. Small cells with low haemoglobin means low iron. Large cells means low B12 or folate. One number tells you which vitamin to look at next.
- WBC** White cells, the body's defence. High during an infection, back to normal after. High with no infection, or very low, is a doctor's line.
- PLATELETS** Clotting. Low in dengue and some infections. A fall of half in a few days matters more than the number itself.

2

SUGAR

- FASTING** Sugar after an overnight fast. Up to 99 normal. 100 to 125 prediabetes. 126 and above, diabetes. Two readings on two days confirm it.
- PP** Sugar two hours after a meal. Under 140 normal. 140 to 199 prediabetes. 200 and above, diabetes. This line rises years before the fasting one does.
- HbA1c** Your average sugar over three months, in one percentage. Under 5.7 normal. 5.7 to 6.4 prediabetes. 6.5 and above, diabetes. Fasting the night before cannot fix it.

THE ONE THAT TURNS BACK

Prediabetes is the last stop before diabetes and the only one that reverses fully. If you are in that band, this is the year to act, not next year.

3

CHOLESTEROL · LIPID PROFILE

LDL The one that blocks arteries. Under 100 is where you want it. 100 to 129 is near it. Heart disease already? The target is under 70.

HDL The one that clears. Under 40 for men, under 50 for women is a risk. 60 and above protects. Walking and good fat raise it; nothing else does much.

TRIGLYCERIDES Fat made from extra sugar, maida and alcohol. Under 150 normal. 150 to 199 borderline. 200 and above, high. This line answers to the plate fastest.

THE EGG The cholesterol in an egg is not what raises the cholesterol in your blood. One egg a day is fine. What raises LDL is vanaspati, bakery butter, the oil things are fried in, and sugar.

4

LIVER · LFT

SGPT · ALT An enzyme that leaks from liver cells when they are stressed. Above the range means the liver is complaining. In India the usual reason is fatty liver, not alcohol. Next step: an ultrasound.

SGOT · AST A cousin of SGPT, also found in muscle. High SGOT with a normal SGPT after a hard workout is the gym, not the liver.

GGT Rises with alcohol and fatty liver. If SGPT and GGT are both up, the liver is the story.

FATTY LIVER GRADE On the ultrasound, not the blood test. Grade 1 with a normal SGPT: the plate alone fixes it. Grade 2, or SGPT above 50: the same plate, plus a doctor who follows it up. Five percent of your weight off in six months, and the scan changes.

5

KIDNEY · KFT

CREATININE Waste the kidney filters out. Roughly 0.6 to 1.2 for men, 0.5 to 1.1 for women. Rising creatinine is the kidney slowing down. Any rise above the range: a doctor, and drink normally, not less.

UREA Also waste. Goes up when you are dehydrated or eating a lot of protein. Read it with creatinine, never alone.

eGFR The kidney's filtering speed. Above 90 is normal. Under 60 for three months is kidney disease and needs a doctor.

WATER

Two and a half to three litres a day, more in summer. Pale yellow urine is the check. Dark yellow means the kidney is working with too little.

6

URIC ACID

THE NUMBER

Roughly 3 to 7 for women, 4 to 8.6 for men. High for years gives gout, a red hot toe joint at night, and kidney stones.

NOT THE DAL

Dal and rajma get blamed. They are not the reason. Cold drinks, packet juice, sweets, beer and red meat push uric acid up. Sugar is the biggest one.

OUT

Sweet drinks of every kind, alcohol, organ meat, too much red meat, and crash diets. Going hungry pushes uric acid up too.

IN

Dahi every day, cherries and amla when in season, three litres of water, and a normal plate of dal, roti, sabzi. Coffee without sugar helps.

GOUT ATTACK

A joint red, hot and swollen overnight is a doctor today, not a diet. Food keeps the next one away.

7

THYROID · TFT

- TSH** The signal from the brain telling the thyroid to work. 0.4 to 4.0 is normal. Above 4 means the thyroid is slow and the brain is shouting. Above 10, doctors treat it. Between 4 and 10, they look at symptoms and T4.
- T4, T3** The hormones themselves. High TSH with a low T4 is a slow thyroid: weight gain, cold, hair fall, tiredness. High TSH with a normal T4 is early, "subclinical".
- LOW TSH** Below 0.4 with a high T4 is an overactive thyroid: weight loss, racing heart, sweating. Always a doctor.
- THE TABLET** Thyroid tablet on an empty stomach, water only, and nothing to eat for 30 to 45 minutes. Chai, milk, calcium and iron tablets taken with it block it. That alone can be why the TSH is not coming down.

8

VITAMINS

- VITAMIN D** Printed as 25(OH)D, in ng/mL. Under 12 is deficient. 12 to 20 is low. 20 and above is enough. Indoors all day, sunscreen, covered skin: expect this one low.
- VITAMIN B12** In pg/mL. Under 200 is low on most labs. Vegetarians and anyone on long-term acidity or sugar tablets are the usual ones. Low B12 shows as tingling hands, tiredness, early grey, a large MCV on page 1.
- FERRITIN** Iron in storage. Not on every basic panel, worth asking for. Low ferritin with a normal haemoglobin is the stage before anaemia, and the stage where hair falls. Under 30 and the hair notices.
- FOLATE** Goes with B12. Low in people who eat few green vegetables and dal. Palak, methi, chana and rajma bring it back.

9

SUPPLEMENTS DONE RIGHT

D3, NOT D2

Read the sachet. It must say cholecalciferol, which is D3. If it says ergocalciferol, D2, change it. D2 lowers your own D3.

WITH FAT

Swallow vitamin D with a meal that has fat: ghee on the roti, curd or an egg. On an empty stomach a third is wasted.

B12

Tablet or injection as the doctor gives. Dahi, milk and paneer every day keep it from falling again.

IRON

Iron tablet with nimbu pani or an amla, never with chai, milk or a calcium tablet. Black stool is normal on iron.

TEST AGAIN

Vitamin D and B12: test before you start and after three months. Nobody takes a 60,000 unit sachet every week for a year on guesswork.

10

WHAT FOOD FIXES, LINE BY LINE

TRIGLYCERIDES Sugar in drinks, juice, sweets, maida and alcohol. Cut those and this line drops in six to eight weeks. The fastest number on the report.

SGPT Same list, plus a walk after dinner and dinner three hours before bed. Five percent of your weight off and the liver lets go.

HbA1c A protein at breakfast, dal or chana with every rice or roti, a ten-minute walk after each meal, and no sweet drinks. Three months, then test again.

LDL Vanaspati, bakery food and fried snacks from outside go. Mustard oil or ghee in small amounts, nuts, oats, dalia and dal come in. Walk daily.

HAEMOGLOBIN Rajma, chana, palak, methi, dates, til, with nimbu on the same plate. Chai an hour away from meals.

11

FOR MUMMY AND PAPA

THE THREE TESTS

Vitamin B12, haemoglobin, vitamin D, every year after 50. One morning, fasting, one prick.

TELL THE DOCTOR

On a sugar tablet (metformin) or a daily antacid for more than two years? Say so. Both block B12, and most parents have never been told.

WHAT LOW LOOKS LIKE

B12 under 200: tiredness, tingling feet, forgetting names, low mood. Haemoglobin under 12: breathless on stairs. Vitamin D under 20: aching bones. Report lines, not age.

THE MORNING

Water first, then four soaked almonds, chai after that. Chai an hour after breakfast, not with it.

PROTEIN

After 50 the body needs more protein, not less. A full katori of dal, curd, paneer or eggs at every meal. Weak teeth: moong khichdi with curd, paneer bhurji.

12

BONES

THE SCAN A bone density scan (DEXA) is for women after menopause or anyone with a fracture, long steroid use or a thyroid problem. T-score below minus 2.5 is osteoporosis.

CALCIUM Dahi, milk or paneer at every meal. Ragi roti or dosa, a spoon of roasted til a day. Palak does not count; its calcium stays locked.

THE SUN Between 11 am and 2 pm, arms and face open, no sunscreen, thirty minutes, three times a week. Sun through a window does not count.

THE PULL Bone gets stronger when muscle pulls on it. Sit to stand from a chair without hands, ten times, twice a day. Climb the stairs.

TABLETS

Food first. Calcium and vitamin D tablets only in the dose the doctor gives. Extra calcium goes to the kidney as stones.

13

ONCE A YEAR

THE LIST Haemoglobin, HbA1c, lipid profile, SGPT, creatinine, uric acid, TSH, vitamin D, vitamin B12. Nine lines, one morning, fasting.

THE FOLDER Keep every year's report in one folder, paper or phone. The change over years is what a doctor wants to see, not one number.

THE PATTERN Sugar up, triglycerides up, SGPT up, weight up: one story. Fix the sugar in drinks and the dinner time, and all four move together.

WHEN TO GO TODAY Haemoglobin under 8. Fasting sugar above 200. Creatinine above the range. A red hot joint. Yellow eyes. Chest pain. None of these wait for a diet.

THE RULE

Read it. Write the number and the date. Fix what the plate can fix. Take the rest to a doctor the same week.

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The report is one part. Your plan is the rest.



I read your reports before I write a single meal. Then the plan: your routine, what you actually eat, your family's food. Three plans of ten days each, so it changes as you change.

See how I work at
ruchigurnani.com/plans

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Ranges: WHO (haemoglobin), US CDC and MedlinePlus (sugar, lipids, kidney, uric acid), NIH Office of Dietary Supplements (vitamin D, B12), American Thyroid Association (TSH). Your lab's printed range takes priority.

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