

## Understanding Your Blood Tests

People living with multiple myeloma will have their blood tested often. Your doctor or nurse will need to test your blood on a regular schedule to see exactly how multiple myeloma affects you.

### Why do I need blood tests?

Your blood tests can tell your doctor or nurse:

- If your multiple myeloma is under control
- Why you may be feeling certain symptoms
- How multiple myeloma is affecting your body
- How treatment is affecting your body

Below is a list of some common and key blood tests:

BLOOD TEST	WHY YOU MAY NEED THIS TEST
Complete blood count (CBC)	Measures the number of red blood cells, white blood cells, and platelets in the blood
Chemistry/metabolic panel	Checks the level of certain substances such as calcium, serum creatinine, and liver enzymes. The results may show how multiple myeloma is affecting your bones, heart, kidneys, and liver
Immunoglobulin levels	Helps to monitor multiple myeloma by counting abnormal antibodies
Serum protein electrophoresis (SPEP)	Helps to monitor multiple myeloma by measuring the abnormal monoclonal protein (M-protein) in the blood
Immunofixation	Helps to monitor multiple myeloma by identifying the types of M-protein in the blood
Serum-free light chain assay	Helps to monitor multiple myeloma by measuring immunoglobulin light chains

## What do my results mean?

Your blood test results may help explain why you have certain symptoms:

TEST RESULTS	SYMPTOMS
Low red blood cell count	Fatigue or exhaustion, sometimes with weakness, pale skin, and dizziness
Low white blood cell count	More fever and infections than normal
Low platelet count	Easily bruised and bleeding, especially when cut or scraped
High blood calcium	Dehydration, constipation, tiredness, and sometimes confusion
Increased monoclonal protein (M-protein)	With large amounts of M-protein, the blood thickens and becomes sticky, which causes shortness of breath, dizziness, and confusion

Always talk to your doctor or nurse about your blood tests. He or she can tell you more about your results and what they mean.

Visit [MyelomaCentral.com](https://www.MyelomaCentral.com) for more information about multiple myeloma and how your health is monitored.



Have you joined the Myeloma Central Facebook community?

Like our page and get multiple myeloma resources right in your newsfeed.

