



Blood...What's in it for me?

A complete blood count is a test used to evaluate your overall health and detect a wide range of disorders, including anemia, infection and blood disorders. Blood cells are made in your bone marrow, which is the spongy substance inside of your bones.

Your blood is made up of many parts and each part has a job to do:

Red Blood Cells	Red blood cells are important because they carry oxygen to the cells and carbon dioxide from the cells. These elements are the reason for the color of your blood.
White Blood Cells	White blood cells help fight infection in the body and are part of the immune system.
Platelets	Small blood cells that help with clotting by fixing damage to blood vessel walls.
Plasma	Plasma is the fluid portion of the blood that is responsible for transporting proteins through the body.

Abnormal increases or decreases in cell counts in a complete blood count may indicate that you have an underlying medical condition that calls for further evaluation.

Looking at your blood test results



Test	Reference (what's normal)
LKCS - Leukocytes	4.0-11.0
HB - Hemoglobin	130-180
PLT -Platelet	150-400
ANC –Absolute Neutrophil Count	2.0-7.5

* Leukocytes is an umbrella term for all white blood cells.

Please note what is considered a normal range may vary a bit between different labs. Also, what is considered to be normal for you may depend on many things including your diagnosis or your current treatment. The normal references listed above are only a guide, please discuss with your health care team if you have any further questions.

Some terms you may hear us use:

- **Anemia** – A lower than normal amount of red blood cells (HB) would indicate anemia and may cause you to feel weak and tired. Your doctor may order a transfusion of red blood cells or iron for you.
- **Low white count** – White blood cells help your body to fight infections from things like bacteria, viruses, or fungi. There are different types of white blood cells that work together to protect your body from infection. A lower than normal amount of white blood cells (WBC) could impact your ability to fight infections.
- **Neutropenia** – Neutrophils are an important type of white blood cell that is a part of your immune system. Neutrophils are the white blood cells that respond first and they are good at fighting against bacteria and some types of fungus. If your body has too few neutrophils (ANC), you have **neutropenia**. A lower than normal amount of neutrophils (ANC) could mean you are at higher risk for fever and infection.
- **Thrombocytopenia** – A lower than normal amount of platelets (PLT) would indicate thrombocytopenia and may cause you to bruise and bleed more easily.