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NT-proB-type Natriuretic Peptide (BNP)

NT-proB-type Natriuretic Peptide (BNP) blood test

B-type natriuretic peptide (BNP) is a hormone produced by your heart. N-terminal (NT)-pro hormone BNP (NT-proBNP) is a non-active prohormone that is released from the same molecule that produces BNP. Both BNP and NT-proBNP are released in response to changes in pressure inside the heart. These changes can be related to heart failure and other cardiac problems. Levels goes up when heart failure develops or gets worse, and levels goes down when heart failure is stable. In most cases, BNP and NT-proBNP levels are higher in patients with heart failure than people who have normal heart function.

How is my level of BNP/NT-proBNP measured?

You may hear your healthcare team refer to BNP or NT-proBNP levels, depending on the equipment used by the laboratory. BNP and NT-proBNP are measured as a simple blood test to help diagnose and monitor heart failure. BNP and NT-proBNP test results provide different values. At Cleveland Clinic, doctors rely mostly on NT-proBNP testing to monitor patients with heart failure. You do not need to fast or do anything to prepare for the test.

What do the results mean?

The results help your doctor or nurse determine if you have heart failure, if worsening fatigue or shortness of breath are due to heart failure or another problem or if heart failure has progressed toward end-of-life. It is important to note that this test is only one method your doctor or nurse uses to monitor your condition. Based on your results, your doctor can choose the best treatment plan for you.

A normal level of NT-proBNP, based on Cleveland Clinic's Reference Range is:

- Less than 125 pg/mL for patients aged 0-74 years
- Less than 450 pg/mL for patients aged 75-99 years

If you have heart failure, the following NT-proBNP levels could mean your heart function is unstable:

- Higher than 450 pg/mL for patients under age 50
- Higher than 900 pg/mL for patients age 50 and older

Your doctor or nurse can give you more specific information about your test results. Depending on your personal health history, your normal range may differ from other patients with different backgrounds.

More information about BNP/NT-proBNP is available in the references below.

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Last reviewed by a Cleveland Clinic medical professional on 04/25/2019.

References

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