Diabetes

& the Glycosylated haemoglobin (Hb_{A1c}) laboratory test used to monitor it.

This brochure provides a simple explanation of the Hb_{A1c} test that is used to monitor Diabetes and how often this test is recommended to be performed.

western diagnostic Pathology

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This is one of the three laboratory tests that are routinely used to monitor the progress of Diabetes.

Cholesterol, including a full lipid work up, and a urine albumin creatinine ratio are the others.

Glycosylated (or glycated) haemoglobin (also called haemoglobin $A1_c$, Hb_{1c}, Hb_{A1c} or Hg_{A1c}).

Haemoglobin is found in your red blood cells & it helps carry oxygen to all your body tissues. Glycosylated haemoglobin (HbA1c) is a form of haemoglobin used to identify the plasma glucose (sugar) concentration over time. It forms by haemoglobin's normal exposure to plasma glucose.

The formation of HbA1c occurs over the whole 120-day normal life span of the red blood cell. Once a haemoglobin molecule is glycosylated (has glucose attached) it remains that way.

Because of this, the buildup of Hb_{A1c} within the red cells reflects the average level of glucose to which the cells have been exposed during their life cycle.

Measuring HbA1c helps check how well glucose has been controlled long term. The HbA1c level is proportional to average blood glucose concentration over the previous four weeks to three months. Treatment goals for each patient vary and your Doctor has probably told you the target range of HbA1c values he or she wants you to aim for. In general, a well controlled diabetic has a HbA1c level that is close to or within the reference range.

How often should you be tested?

Most Doctors recommend this test every three to six months.

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