

## Will I receive an account ?

This test is complex to perform and every result is assessed and reported by one of our Chemical Pathologists. AMH is not one of the tests currently covered by Medicare. Consequently, no contribution towards the cost of this test will be made by Medicare. You will be responsible for the full account. For the exact cost, please refer to our brochure; "My Pathology Test. What will it cost? A billing guide for outpatients"

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# AntiMullerian Hormone

**A test for Ovarian Reserve**

**Information for patients**



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# AntiMullerian Hormone (AMH)

## What is AMH ?

AMH is a hormone made by the small follicles in the ovary which have not yet begun to develop into mature eggs or ovum. These early developing follicles are called antral and pre-antral follicles. As the number of these early follicles falls over time, the level of AMH made also decreases.

This makes AMH an excellent marker of the number of remaining early follicles. Follicle number can be abnormally increased in women with a condition called Polycystic Ovarian Syndrome (PCOS). Many women with PCOS have irregular periods or amenorrhoea (absent periods). However as AMH levels are not affected by the menstrual cycle or irregular periods these women can have the test at any time and it will still be helpful.

## Why is AMH measured ?

- *AMH is useful to assess 'Ovarian reserve'*
- *Increased AMH can be a marker of 'Polycystic Ovarian Syndrome'*
- *AMH can be used prior to 'Fertility treatments' to help plan management*

## REDUCED LEVELS of AMH

### What is ovarian reserve ?

Ovarian reserve is a term used to describe the number of good quality eggs a woman has in her ovaries. Women are born with about 1 million eggs. Normally there is a slow decline in the number of viable eggs in the ovaries over time. However a small number of women have a faster rate of egg loss. These women can have very reduced numbers of viable eggs and poor ovarian reserve even in their thirties. This results in the woman being less fertile.

### Who is likely to have reduced ovarian reserve ?

Some conditions are known to reduce ovarian reserve:

- *Family history of early menopause*
- *Surgery to the ovary*
- *Severe endometriosis*
- *Chemotherapy*
- *Radiotherapy*

However, the majority of women who have reduced ovarian reserve have NO predisposing risk factors. Often their FSH (Follicle stimulating hormone) level can also appear to be "normal". This is why the AMH level can be very helpful in identifying these women.

## Why is AMH helpful for women planning a family ?

Women who are considering the timing of possible pregnancy may benefit from having an AMH level. The finding of a lower than expected level may prompt trying for a baby sooner rather than later. One of the results of less ovarian reserve is reduced fertility. Fewer viable eggs reduce the chance of successful ovulation and pregnancy.

To improve a women's chance of a successful pregnancy, it is important to identify reduced ovarian reserve early so that further help can be offered if needed. Advice or support from fertility specialists with assisted reproductive technology may be appropriate.

## What happens if reduced ovarian reserve is diagnosed ?

If reduced ovarian reserve is diagnosed, women may wish to seek advice and support from fertility specialists. No treatments are currently available that help new eggs to grow. Assisted reproduction techniques may be offered.

## INCREASED LEVELS of AMH

### What is Polycystic Ovarian Syndrome (PCOS)?

This is a condition which often results in irregular or absent periods. Hormone tests may be used to confirm the lack of cycling that occurs. Some women have increased androgens (testosterone and other related hormones) or evidence of increased androgen activity such as acne or mild excess facial/body hair. Some women have characteristic changes in their ovaries on ultrasound of extra follicles.

### How is PCOS diagnosed ?

PCOS is a condition which should be diagnosed by your own Doctor depending on your medical history, symptoms, examination, results of blood tests and often an ultrasound. AMH has been shown to be higher in women with PCOS and may also be helpful in assessment of this condition. AMH can be tested at any time even if the woman has irregular or absent menses.

### Fertility treatment and PCOS

AMH levels may be helpful for Fertility Specialists in assessing the therapy that best suits individual women. An AMH level may be requested prior to treatment.