

Any Lab Test Now

PHENYTOIN (DILANTIN) LAB TEST

DESCRIPTION

Phenytoin (brand name Dilantin) is an anticonvulsant or antiepileptic medication used to treat and prevent generalized tonic-clonic (grand mal) seizures, complex partial seizures (psychomotor) seizures and seizures occurring during or after neurosurgery. Although it is not clearly understood how phenytoin works, it is thought that the medication reduces the sensitivity of nerves in the brain to stimulation and reduces the transmission of impulses between the nerves.

Phenytoin dosage is specific to the individual and may increase the metabolism of other medications in the body. It can also cause side effects and liver or kidney damage so regularly monitoring of the concentration in the blood and watching for unusual symptoms is important. Your physician will check blood levels every few days during initial treatment and then recurrent testing is necessary to track efficacy and to ensure that the level in the blood is in the therapeutic range.

WHY DO I NEED THIS TEST?

Phenytoin is a powerful, effective medication for treating and preventing seizures but it may cause serious side effects and, infrequently, liver damage. It is not recommended for those with certain kidney and liver diseases or the elderly. Specific medications can interact unpredictably with phenytoin and may increase the potential for toxicity of phenytoin. These include acute alcohol use, Diazepam, Prozac, Concerta, Prilosec, and Zoloft among others. Phenytoin can cause anemia, a rise in blood sugar, sexual dysfunction, dizziness, drowsiness, vitamin D deficiency, loss of appetite, nausea, vomiting and abdominal pain.

Blood levels of phenytoin should be monitored frequently when treatment begins and then periodically once the treatment level has been established to ensure that it remains in the therapeutic range. A phenytoin test may be recommended if a patient does not seem to be responding to the medication. The test can determine if the concentration is too low or the patient is not taking the medication as directed. If you are experiencing troublesome or severe side effects such as swelling of the gums or lymph nodes, hirsutism (unusual hair growth), insomnia or kidney failure or liver disease a phenytoin test is recommended.

AM I REQUIRED TO FAST FOR THIS LAB TEST?

No. You are not required to fast for this test.

WRITTEN BY:

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Ekan Essien, MD, MPH, a native Georgian, received his BA from Duke University. Dr. Essien continued his education at Florida A&M University where he received his Masters of Public Health in Epidemiology; received his medical degree from Meharry Medical College in Nashville, Tennessee; and obtained training in general and trauma surgery at Grady Memorial Hospital at Morehouse School of Medicine. He is a candidate in the post graduate fellowship in anti-aging and regenerative medicine from the American Academy of Anti-Aging Medicine.

FOR MORE INFORMATION OR TO SCHEDULE YOUR TEST TODAY CALL 1.800.384.4567

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