

Cervical cancer risk

What you need to know about the CA125 test, including its benefits and limitations.

Suitability for the test

The CA125 test is suitable for those aged over 40, unless there is a family history of ovarian or breast cancer in close relatives diagnosed under 50.

About the test

The CA125 test can help detect ovarian cancer at an early stage, before symptoms appear. Early detection makes treatment more likely to succeed. By the time symptoms appear, cancer may have spread and become harder to treat.

Results

Raised test result

- A raised CA125 level does not necessarily mean you have ovarian cancer. Make an appointment with your GP, who can advise whether the test should be repeated and whether an ultrasound is needed.
- False-positive results are possible - the test may appear abnormal with no cancer present, causing anxiety and leading to further tests that carry their own risks.

Normal test result

- A normal CA125 result does not rule out ovarian cancer. Around 50% of women with clinically detectable stage I disease will not have a raised CA125 result. Treat a normal result with caution, especially if you experience stomach or pelvic pain, persistent bloating, unexplained weight loss, increased urinary urgency or frequency, unusual tiredness, changes in bowel habits, or loss of appetite.
- False-negative results are possible - the test may appear normal even when cancer is present, which may delay seeking medical care.

Next steps

We understand that a health assessment is just the beginning. That's why we work alongside carefully selected partner organisations to provide you with exclusive onward cancer support.

Scan the QR code below to stay up to date with our latest partnerships.

