THE CENTER FOR Digestive Wellness TRICITIES Gastroenterology

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## Overview

Gamma-glutamyltransferase, also known as GGT, is an enzyme that is found mainly in the liver. But it may also be found in the:

» kidney
» biliary tract
» heart
» brain
» intestine
» pancreas
» spleen

## Who is a candidate for the test?

GGT levels are measured when a doctor suspects there is damage or disease in the liver or the biliary system.

## How is the test performed?

In order to measure the amount of GGT in the blood, a blood sample is taken from a vein on the forearm or hand. First, the skin over the vein is cleaned with an antiseptic. Next, a rubber tube called a tourniquet is tied around the upper arm. This enlarges the veins in the lower arm by restricting blood flow through them. A fine needle is gently inserted into a vein, and the tourniquet is removed. Blood flows from the vein through the needle and is collected in a syringe or vial for testing in the laboratory. After the needle is withdrawn,,the puncture site is covered for a short time to prevent bleeding.

## What is involved in preparation for the test?

Generally, no preparation is required for this test.

## What do the test results mean?

For men, the healthy values for GGT are 2 to 30 U/L. For women, the healthy range is 1 to 24 U/L. .Abnormal levels of GGT can be found in the following conditions:

» Alcoholism
» Brain tumor
» Diabetes
» Gallbladder disease or other diseases of the biliary system
» Heart attack
» Liver diseases such as hepatitis, cirrhosis, or cancer
» Mononucleosis
» Pancreatitis

In addition, certain medicines that are used to prevent seizures such as tegretol, phenobarbital, and dilantin may be related to abnormal levels of GGT.