

Vitamin D Testing Criteria

SCL Otago/Southland

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SDHB policy on vitamin D testing

Vitamin D tests were originally developed for investigation of rickets, osteomalacia and other metabolic bone disorders. In recent years the number of requests for vitamin D tests has increased dramatically. Most of these requests are unrelated to metabolic bone disease, and have arisen because of reported associations between various disease states (cancers, cardiovascular disease, diabetes, autoimmune disorders and infectious diseases) and lower vitamin D concentrations.

However, a causal link has yet to be demonstrated for any of these conditions. The Institute of Medicine, following a comprehensive review of the evidence, concluded that *“For extraskeletal outcomes, including cancer, cardiovascular disease, diabetes, and autoimmune disorders, the evidence was inconsistent, inconclusive as to causality, and insufficient to inform nutritional requirements. Randomized clinical trial evidence for extraskeletal outcomes was limited and generally uninformative.”*

A recent review for the Ontario Ministry of Health has concluded that there is little evidence that it is useful to measure vitamin D concentrations in patients without symptoms of metabolic bone disease.

From 1st October 2015, the following criteria will be applied to vitamin D tests in SDHB.

Vitamin D will be performed only when:

1. Ordered by the following specialists: Endocrinologist, Gastroenterologist, Bariatric Surgeon, Rheumatologists, Paediatricians and Nephrologists.
2. Ordered for those in specific high risk groups for rickets/osteomalacia (e.g. cystic fibrosis, proven malabsorption, bariatric surgery, refugees, those with deeply pigmented skin and those who wear clothing that covers the head and face)
3. Ordered for the investigation of rickets or osteomalacia, disorders of calcium and phosphate metabolism or osteoporosis
4. Children under 16 years of age
5. Ordered for other patients after discussion with, and approval by, a Chemical Pathologist
6. Patient on Rituximab (Mabthera)

In all other cases, advance payment will be required before testing will proceed.