

<b>CA15.3</b>	
<b>Description</b>	CA 15-3 is a high molecular weight transmembrane glycoprotein, also known as MUC1, that is frequently overexpressed and aberrantly glycosylated in cancer.
<b>Indication</b>	<p><b>This marker should only be requested in patients with known breast cancer:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Monitoring treatment in patients with advanced breast cancer; changes in the concentration of CA 15-3 may indicate whether a tumour is responding to treatment.</li> <li>For detecting recurrences in patients with diagnosed breast cancer. The clinical value of this practice is unknown.</li> </ul>
<b>Additional Info</b>	Increasing and decreasing values show correlation with disease progression and regression, respectively. In general, higher concentrations of CA 15-3 suggest that the breast cancer is more advanced and that a larger amount of tumour is present. The concentration of CA 15-3 tends to increase as the cancer grows. In metastatic breast cancer, the highest concentrations of CA 15-3 are often seen when the cancer has spread to the bones and/or the liver.
<b>Concurrent Tests</b>	None
<b>Dietary Requirements</b>	None
<b>Interpretation</b>	<p><b>Reference range: &lt; 30 KU/L</b></p> <p><b>Malignancies with elevated levels</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Elevated in 80% of women with advanced metastatic breast cancer. Rarely elevated in patients with local breast cancer.</li> <li>May also be high in other adenocarcinomas, especially with distant metastasis; elevated levels have been reported in malignancies of the lung, liver, pancreas, colon, ovary, cervix and endometrium.</li> </ul> <p><b>Benign diseases with elevated levels</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Benign liver disease (e.g. cirrhosis), hypothyroidism, sarcoidosis, possibly benign breast disease, benign ovarian disease, endometriosis, pelvic inflammatory disease</li> <li>The CA 15-3 elevations seen in these non-cancerous conditions tend to be stable over time.</li> </ul> <p><b>Additional causes of elevated levels</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Pregnancy and lactation</li> </ul> <p><b>A negative CA 15-3 result cannot be used to confirm the absence of cancer in a patient.</b></p>
<b>Collection Conditions</b>	Usually avoid testing in the first few weeks following commencement of treatment to avoid detecting temporary alterations in CA 15-3 that do not correlate with the response to therapy.
<b>Frequency of testing</b>	Minimum retesting interval for monitoring disease recurrence – 2 months