

## Aspartate Aminotransferase (AST) Serum

<b>Description</b>	ALT is routinely used in preference to AST. AST must be specifically requested.
<b>Indication</b>	Liver function and myocardial damage.
<b>Additional Info</b>	AST catalyses the interconversion of amino acids and alpha-ketoacids by transferring amino groups. AST is present in the mitochondria and cytosol of hepatocytes, red blood cells, heart, brain and muscle.
<b>Concurrent Tests</b>	ALP, GGT, ALT
<b>Dietary Requirements</b>	N/A
<b>Interpretation</b>	AST is present in high concentrations in the heart, liver, skeletal muscle, kidney and red blood cells. Damage to any of these tissues may increase serum AST levels. Moderately raised levels can be found in cirrhosis, cholestatic jaundice, malignant infiltration of the liver, after trauma or surgery especially cardiac surgery, severe haemolytic anaemia, skeletal surgery muscle disease (myositis, muscular dystrophy), severe or prolonged exercise and intramuscular injections may cause a mild elevation in AST. Markedly raised levels (10-100 times the upper adult ref limit) can be seen in circulatory failure with shock and hypoxia, myocardial infarction and hepatitis.
<b>Collection Conditions</b>	Haemolysed samples are unsuitable for analysis.
<b>Frequency of testing</b>	As required