Prealbumin

Description	Prealbumin is a precursor of albumin and is tryptophan rich.
Indication	In the absence of an acute phase response prealbumin is an indicator of nutritional status - as a marker of protein deficiency. It is used to diagnose patients with malnutrition and to monitor patients at risk of poor nutrition. It is also an index of liver function in hepatobiliary disease.
Additional Info	Prealbumin has a half-life of two days. Albumin can also be used to monitor nutritional status, however, prealbumin changes more quickly, making it more useful for detecting changes in short-term nutritional status than albumin.
Concurrent Tests	N/A
Dietary Requirements	N/A
Interpretation	Decreased in acute phase response, renal and hepatic disease and poor nutritional status. May also be decreased in thyrotoxicosis, amyloidosis, hyper-oestrogenism and after IV fluids, serious infections and severe or long-term illness, such as cancer. Increased in alcoholism, high-dose corticosteroid therapy; hyperactive adrenal glands; high-dose nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory medications; and Hodgkin's disease. When inflammation and malnutrition are both present, prealbumin levels fall very far, very quickly. If a patient has kidney failure, prealbumin results may be falsely higher than they actually are. Drugs that can lower prealbumin levels, include amiodarone, oestrogens, and oral contraceptives. Drugs that can cause prealbumin levels to rise are anabolic steroids, androgens (male hormones), and prednisolone.
Collection Conditions	N/A
Frequency of testing	As required