
Lab Dept: Hematology

Test Name: RETICULOCYTE COUNT

General Information

Lab Order Codes: RETB

Synonyms: Retic Panel; Retic Count, Whole Blood; Retic

CPT Codes: 85045 – Reticulocyte count, flow cytometry

Test Includes: % Retics; Immature Retic Fraction (IRF) and Absolute Retics

Logistics

Test Indications: For evaluating erythropoietic activity in patients with hemolytic anemia, hemorrhage, uremia, aplastic anemia, aplastic crisis of hemolytic anemia, thalassemia, pernicious anemia, sideroblastic anemia, after bone marrow transplant, and after treatment for iron deficiency anemia and megaloblastic anemia.

Lab Testing Sections: Hematology

Phone Numbers: MIN Lab: 612-813-6280

STP Lab: 651-220-6550

Test Availability: Daily, 24 hours

Turnaround Time: 4 hours

Special Instructions: N/A

Specimen

Specimen Type: Whole blood

Container: EDTA Lavender top tube or EDTA Lavender Microtainer®

Draw Volume:

Lavender (EDTA) 2 mL Vacutainer tube: Minimum fill volume of **1 mL** is required. Allow the tube to fill until the vacuum is exhausted, and blood flow ceases.

Lavender (EDTA) Microtainer® tube: Minimum of **0.5 mL** is required. To be used for neonates, collected volumes <1.0 mL, or when a capillary (skin puncture) collection is required

Processed Volume: Same as Draw Volume

Collection:	Venipuncture or Capillary collection.
Special Processing:	Lab Staff: Do Not Centrifuge. Testing is performed on whole blood
Patient Preparation:	None
Sample Rejection:	Improper tube; clotted sample; underfilled tube; overfilled tubes; mislabeled or unlabeled specimens

Interpretive

Reference Range:

Instrument Count:	
Age	Result (%)
0 - 3 days:	4.3 - 8.3%
4 days - 6 months:	1.3 - 2.7%
>6 months:	0.7 - 2.8%
Manual Miller Disc:	
0 - 3 days:	2.0 - 70%
4 days - 6 months:	0.0 - 2.0%
>6 months:	0.5 - 1.5%

Critical Values:	N/A
Limitations:	In transfused patients, reticulocytes may decrease on a dilutional basis.
Methodology:	Fluorescent Flow Cytometry
Contraindications:	Patients receiving a large number of transfusions.
References:	Harmening DH (1997) Clinical Hematology and Fundamentals of Hemostasis, 3 rd ed Oski and Nathan (1998) Hematology of Infancy and Childhood, 5 th ed
Updates:	1/21/2014: CPT update. 9/26/2018: Update to lipemic specimen info. 4/2/2025: Updated volume requirements