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**Lab Dept:** Chemistry

**Test Name:** INTERLEUKIN-6

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***General Information***

**Lab Order Codes:** IL6

**Synonyms:** Interleukin-6, Highly Sensitive

**CPT Codes:** 83520 – Immunoassay, analyte, quantitative, not otherwise specified

**Test Includes:** Interleukin 6 level reported in pg/mL.

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***Logistics***

**Test Indications:** IL-6, a multi-functional cytokine produced by a range of cells, plays a central role in host defense mechanisms, is involved in induction of B-cell differentiation, induction of IL-2 and IL-2 receptor expression and proliferation and differentiation of T cells. Elevated IL-6 concentrations are reported in a variety of autoimmune diseases (e.g., rheumatoid arthritis), proliferative diseases (e.g., mesangial proliferative glomerulonephritis), and malignancies (e.g., leukemia and lymphoma).

**Lab Testing Sections:** Chemistry – Sendouts

**Referred to:** Mayo Medical Laboratories (MML: IL6)

**Phone Numbers:** MIN Lab: 612-813-6280

STP Lab: 651-220-6550

**Test Availability:** Daily, 24 hours

**Turnaround Time:** 1 - 8 days (performed Thursdays)

**Special Instructions:** N/A

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***Specimen***

**Specimen Type:** Blood

**Container:** Lavender (EDTA) top tube

**Draw Volume:** 1.5 mL (Minimum: 0.9 mL) blood

**Processed Volume:** 0.5 mL (Minimum: 0.3 mL) plasma

<b>Collection:</b>	Routine blood collection. Place specimen on wet ice and send to lab. Must be processed within 30 minutes of draw.
<b>Special Processing:</b>	Lab Staff: Centrifuge specimen at 1500 for 10 minutes, remove plasma aliquot and freeze immediately. Store and ship at frozen temperatures. Forward promptly.
<b>Patient Preparation:</b>	None
<b>Sample Rejection:</b>	Unlabeled or mislabeled specimen; gross lipemia; specimens other than EDTA plasma; specimens received/stored at room temp

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### ***Interpretive***

**Reference Range:** < or =1.8 pg/mL

Interpretation: Elevated concentrations of Interleukin-6 (IL6) may indicate an ongoing inflammatory response, and could be consistent with a systemic infection, or chronic inflammatory disease.

**Critical Values:** N/A

**Limitations:** Interleukin 6 is a nonspecific marker associated with an inflammatory response, and is not diagnostic for any specific disease or disease process. Elevated concentrations of IL-6 must be interpreted within the clinical context of the patient.

Normal concentrations of IL6 do not exclude the possibility of an ongoing inflammatory process.

IL6 has limited stability. Following centrifugation, plasma must be immediately frozen or refrigerated. Samples can only be stored at refrigerated temperatures for 24 hours, after which time samples must be frozen. Storage of plasma for any length of time at room temperature, is not acceptable.

**Methodology:** Cytokine assay

**References:** [Mayo Medical Laboratories](#) (March 2018)

**Updates:**  
3/24/2009: Updated volumes, method and CPT.  
8/14/2017: Moved to a forward test from MML.  
3/14/2018: Moved back to internal test at MML.