Lab Dept: Chemistry

Test Name: POTASSIUM (K)

General Information

Lab Order Codes: K
Synonyms: K
CPT Codes: 84132 – Potassium; serum
Test Includes: Potassium concentration measured in mEq/L. Test is also a part of the Electrolyte Panel, Basic Metabolic Panel, Comprehensive Metabolic Panel and Renal Panel.

Logistics

Test Indications: Potassium is the major intracellular cation. Elevated values may be found in kidney disease, adrenal insufficiency, and diabetes mellitus. Low values are noted in prolonged diarrhea, vomiting and administration of diuretics.

Lab Testing Sections: Chemistry
Phone Numbers: MIN Lab: 612-813-6280
STP Lab: 651-220-6550
Test Availability: Daily, 24 hours
Turnaround Time: 30 minutes
Special Instructions: See Collection

Specimen

Specimen Type: Blood
Container: Green top (Li Heparin) tube, preferred
Alternate tube: Red, marble or gold top tube
Draw Volume: 0.6 mL blood
Processed Volume: 0.2 mL serum/plasma
Collection: Routine collection. Must be an atraumatic draw without hemolysis.
**Special Processing:**
Lab Staff: Centrifuge specimen within 1 hour of collection, and remove serum/plasma aliquot into a plastic sample cup. Store at refrigerated temperatures.

**Patient Preparation:**
None

**Sample Rejection:**
Mislabeled or unlabeled specimen

### Interpretive

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age:</th>
<th>Range (mEq/L):</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0 days - 1 year</td>
<td>3.3 - 5.9 mEq/L</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 - 12 years</td>
<td>3.5 - 5.5 mEq/L</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&gt;12 years</td>
<td>3.5 - 5.3 mEq/L</td>
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</tbody>
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**Critical Values:**
<2.5 mEq/L or >6.5 mEq/L

**Limitations:**
Hemolysis of the sample will yield falsely increased potassium results. Hemolysis will be noted as a comment along with numerical results.

Samples exposed to benzylonium salts, present in certain blood catheter devices, will cause falsely increased potassium levels.

**Methodology:**
Integrated Multisensor Technology

**References:**

QuikLYTE® Integrated Multisensor insert sheet (8/25/2011) PN 717500.003 - US

Dimension RxL MAX Operator’s Guide (05/2003)


Clinical Significance Dade Behring Inc., Glasgow Business Community, Mailbox 531, P.O. Box 6101, Newark, Delaware 19714


Updates: 2/17/2005: Lower end Critical Value previously listed as <3.0 mEq/L. 8/13/2009: Turnaround time previously listed as 2 hours. 3/3/2015: Updated reference ranges. 2/8/2016: Update alt tube types