

Dear Dr. Meinig: My doctor recently took a blood test that was supposed to test me for a whole lot of things. He didn't tell me why he wanted so many tests and the report said everything was all right except my calcium and uric acid were a little high.

I'm confused because he ordered some more tests and didn't tell me what to do about the two that are high. Why should I have to spend so much for all this testing? K. C.

Dear K. C.: Your physician really did a big favor by prescribing these blood tests. They are an excellent method of locating a possible trouble area in your body mechanisms. The two that are high in your case are very important to your health.

Inasmuch as the results of any one test is not conclusive evidence of a disease process, doctors will usually order repeats and/or additional covering tests so he can determine just what body chemistry problem is malfunctioning. Only then is it proper to institute a treatment program.

Many things can effect the results of these tests. For instance drugs can lower or raise test results. Diuretics, for example, can cause dehydration and elevation of many of the figures. Certain foods and beverages can also be an influence.

In cases such as yours alcohol is often the reason for the high uric acid but inability to handle or digest protein is more usual. The showing of high calcium on your test can be due to a great number of different causes.

Most obvious of course could be too high an intake from excess consumption of milk or calcium compounds or it could be too much vitamin D which can increase ones absorption of calcium.

However it may be none of these. The new tests your doctor prescribed he hopes will lead to a definite diagnosis. The hardest thing for patients and at times doctors is not to jump to immediate conclusions on these initial screening test procedures. They are very important even though not too conclusive.

Incidentally the 10 to 20 or more of these blood tests are actually performed today by computers and at a much lesser cost than heretofore. Any one of the tests run individually would cost \$5 to \$15 each while the whole panel was possible by computer for but a fraction of what they were formerly.

Everyone has a question about nutrition. Send yours to: Dr. George E. Meinig, c/o OVN, Box 277, Ojai, CA 93023.