



# Overnight Fasting is No Longer Required for Nearly All Blood Testing Within VA

**You do not need to fast for the most routine VA blood testing at VA Medical Centers and Outpatient Clinics. Please be sure to eat a healthy meal and take your regularly prescribed medications prior to coming to the VA for blood testing.**

## **Why is VA Making This Change?**

- Most routine blood tests, including those for managing high cholesterol and diabetes, no longer require overnight fasting for the results to be accurate.

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- Medical evidence has shown that overnight fasting for blood testing, especially in diabetic patients, can lead to accidents and harmful events related to low blood sugar episodes.

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- Medical evidence has also shown that some patients may have difficulty deciding on important health matters following an overnight fast for blood testing.

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- Most patients who fast overnight for blood testing want an early morning appointment the following day. This high demand for morning appointments leads to inefficiencies and overcrowding of VA parking lots and waiting rooms during these peak busy times. Overcrowding is not just inconvenient, it's also an infection control concern.

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Please note that on rare occasions, overnight fasting for certain non-routine, specialized blood tests may still be necessary. Fasting may also occasionally be needed to make or confirm a new diagnosis of Diabetes Mellitus. On rare occasions, it may also be necessary to withhold one or more of your prescribed medications before blood testing. Lastly, you may be asked to fast overnight or withhold certain medications if you have a specific medical procedure on the same day as your blood testing. Your clinical team will alert you if there is a need for you to fast prior to a procedure or test.

If you have any questions about blood testing or medical procedure requirements, please reach out to your clinical team.



**VA**



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