

Laboratory tests are among the basic medical examination procedures. They are used to obtain an overview of red and white blood cell counts and status, electrolyte balance, coagulation values, hepatic and pancreatic parameters, renal retention and many other specific biochemical data concerning our organic systems. The contribution of laboratory results to spinal column disease diagnostics is comparatively minor, since altered laboratory parameters usually do not constitute final diagnostic confirmation of a given spinal column disease. For example, raised inflammatory parameters in the blood may be an indication of an inflammatory condition in the spinal column if accompanied by the corresponding clinical symptoms. On the other hand, these parameters may also be raised by a number of other infections.

Blood and urine tests

- Blood sedimentation rate, C-reactive protein and leukocytes may be raised in the presence of inflammatory processes.
- Levels of calcium, alkaline phosphatase, phosphate, vitamin D, estrogen and testosterone are indicators for aspects of bone metabolism.
- Raised tumor marker levels may indicate the presence of a tumorous disease.

Liquor analysis

Liquor (cerebrospinal fluid, CSF), obtained by puncturing the subarachnoid space, may contain evidence of various diseases, e.g. inflammatory processes.