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[Translation from Russian to English]

**Laboratory blood tests - CBC**

1. **How is the complete blood count (CBC) performed?**

Usually, a blood sample is collected from the vein, in the internal part of the elbow or on the back of the wrist. In some cases, the CBC is collected from the finger. The forearm is wrapped with an elastic band to get pressure on the area and cause the swelling of the vein. Then a needle is gently introduced into the vein. Blood is collected to a hermetically sealed container. At the end of the process of blood collection, the needle is removed from the vein and a bandage is placed on the open wound of the puncture. This procedure causes a slight feeling of pain, however in some cases it is not felt at all.

1. **The duration of the CBC**

The performance of the CBC takes just a few minutes. The blood samples are then sent to the laboratory, after which the results are obtained within 24 hours.

1. **The results of the CBC**

Each of the tests performed as part of the CBC, namely the tests for white blood cells levels or red blood cells levels and others have a range of normal parameters. The results of blood tests in parentheses indicate the recommended ranges of the normal levels; however, the ranges of the normal levels may vary between laboratories. In addition, not every deviation from the normal levels is a threat. It is advisable to consult with your attending physician regarding the results ​​of the obtained tests before drawing any conclusions.

1. **Preparing for the CBC**

There is no special preparation for the CBC. There is no need to refrain from food before the CBC. However, it is recommended to avoid eating fatty foods before performing the CBC, as they may affect the test results. In addition, the level of body fluids is important, as the dehydration has a negative impact on the test results, so to avoid this, it is recommended to drink plenty of water before going through the CBC.

1. **The risks of the CBC**

There is nothing dangerous about the CBC. Therefore, each blood test is usually a minimal risk. The veins and arteries significantly differ in size, so the nurse who performs the analysis may have some difficulty finding the right vein on the patient’s arm. After blood collection, there is a chance of such phenomena as bleeding from the puncture, dizziness, hematoma or infection - the risk of contamination, as with any open wounds.

1. **The recommended frequency of the CBC**

The CBC is usually recommended for pregnant and postpartum women, patients who are scheduled for surgery or patients with suspected blood disease or anaemia. Occasionally, a family physician recommends performing the CBC as part of routine analysis, according to the age of the patient.