Lactate Dehydrogenase (LDH)

LDH stands for lactate dehydrogenase. LDH is an enzyme (protein) that is found in almost all body cells and helps the body make energy. Very little LDH is usually in the blood. More LDH is found in the blood when cells are damaged or destroyed. This can mean that cancer or another disease is destroying cells in the body.

LDH levels are testing with a blood draw. A small amount of blood will be removed from either your vein or a central line and then tested in a lab.

A higher than normal LDH level can mean:

- You have some sort of tissue damage.
- Anemia.
- Kidney or liver disease.
- Muscle Injury.
- Heart Attack.
- Pancreatitis.
- Infection.

LDH levels are not used to diagnose cancer but can be used to see how well treatment is working. LDH can be used to monitor treatment in testicular cancer, ovarian cancer, lymphoma, leukemia, melanoma, and neuroblastoma.

Your provider will talk to you about what your LDH level means and how often you should have it tested.