

Erythropoietin is a hormone produced by your kidneys that promotes the production of red blood cells from your bone marrow.

When oxygen levels in the blood become low the cells making erythropoietin may not work as well and red blood cell production may be affected, resulting in anaemia.

Erythropoietin is also produced in the liver, although only 10% of the total.

Erythropoietin test

Levels can be measured in the blood and if these are abnormal it may indicate may indicate bone marrow disorders or kidney disease. Some athletes have been know to abuse the drug too. You will need to fast for 8 - 10 hours and probably asked to lie down and relax for a short while beforehand. Then a simple blood test is taken and sent off for analysis.

Normal range for erythropoietin is from 4 to 24 mU/ml

Abnormal levels will steer your physician towards a diagnosis, which will very much depend on your own individual situation.

Erythropoietin drugs

Erythropoietin has been synthesised by drug companies, in a laboratory. It is used to treat certain types of anaemia by stimulating red blood cell production in the bone marrow. It is given intravenously or subcutaneously. It is often used with anaemia in kidney dysfunction and it is a common part of treatment for patients with kidney disease who need it to treat and prevent anaemia.