

Pharmacogenomic (PGx) Testing

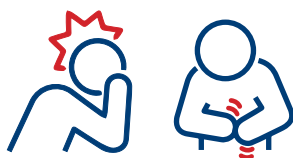
What is PGx testing?

PGx testing uses **your genes** to help find a medicine or dose better suited for you.[†] Everyone has some differences in their genes. Genes are inherited from your biological relatives and they determine many of your characteristics such as height and eye color. Genes also carry information that may explain how you process certain medicines.

PGx testing may help you and your healthcare provider understand:



How a medicine may work for you



Your risk of side effects



Your medicines and treatment plan

What is a PGx test and what does it do?

- The PGx test is a blood test like blood sugar or cholesterol tests. Unlike other lab tests, PGx test results are useful for the rest of your life.
- PGx testing gives you and your healthcare provider information about how you process certain medicines. It is not intended to give information on your risk of certain health conditions like cancer.
- Even if you are not taking a medicine impacted by genetics now, results are kept in your medical record for your healthcare provider to consider in the future.
- Taking a PGx test will not change your genes.
- Results take 10 to 20 days. You and your healthcare provider will each get a written copy.

Is my information protected?

- Veterans Health Administration protects Veterans from discrimination within the VA. Federal law helps to protect all patients from discrimination based on genetic test results by non-VA health insurance companies or employers. Refer to the [Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act \(GINA\)](https://www.genome.gov/genetics-glossary/Genetic-Information-Nondiscrimination-Act). (<https://www.genome.gov/genetics-glossary/Genetic-Information-Nondiscrimination-Act>)
- Your genes cannot be tested and PGx test results cannot be shared outside VA without your permission.
- Your blood sample is destroyed after your results come back. Your PGx test results are not used for research, only for your healthcare.

[†]If you have had a liver transplant or certain bone marrow transplants, you are not a candidate for PGx testing. This is due to differences between your genes and those of your transplant.

What else should I know about PGx testing?

- You will get information that shows how your body processes or responds to certain medicines.
- Your genes come from your blood relatives. If PGx testing shows that you process medicines differently than expected, your blood relatives may also process medicines differently than expected.
- Your healthcare team will follow up with you about your PGx test results.

What could PGx test results mean for me?

Your PGx test results may show that your body breaks down, or metabolizes, certain medicines faster, slower, or similarly to others.



Poor, intermediate, rapid, or ultrarapid metabolizer

- You break down medicines differently than expected.
- Talk to your healthcare provider about what this may mean for you.

Normal metabolizer

- You break down medicines as expected.
- A change in your medicine is likely not needed based on PGx test results.



Do not stop taking any medicines based on PGx test results without talking to your healthcare provider first.

Discuss your PGx test results with your healthcare provider. Many things can impact the medicines you take. These include other conditions you may have, what you eat every day, and even other medicines you take. If you have been on a medicine that works for you without side effects, there may not be a reason to change your medicine.

VA pharmacists are an important member of your healthcare team. Your healthcare provider may refer you to your VA pharmacist for advice when your PGx test results come back.

