Ethanol (Alcohol) (ALCO)

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TEST OVERVIEW

Test Name	Ethanol (Alcohol)
Test Code	ALCO
Short Description	Ethanol (Alcohol)

OVERVIEW

Test Name	Ethanol (Alcohol)
Test Code	ALCO
Category	Biochemistry
TAT	Main Lab: 6, Hour(s) Family Site: <8hrs, <6hrs
Specimen(s)	1 x Venous blood - 5 mL Tube - Gold - SST-Serum Separator Tube

SPECIMEN(S)

SST-Serum Separator Tube

Specimen Type	SST-Serum Separator Tube
Specimen Format	Tube
Specimen Colour	Gold
Specimen Volume	5 mL
Sampling Order	2
Origin	Venous blood
Collection time after baseline	-
Transport Temperature	15-25°C
Accepted Other Specimens	Lithium Heparin Plasma EDTA Plasma Citrated Plasma

	Serum
TAT	Main Lab: 6, Hour(s) Family Site: <8hrs, <6hrs
Test Stability	Room Temp: 2 Week(s) 2–8°C: 6 Month(s)

CLINICAL INFORMATION

Ethanol (Alcohol)

Methodology	-
Specimen Type	SST-Serum Separator Tube
Delay before pre-treatment	8
Transport Temperature	15-25°C
Transport Stability at room temp	2 -
Transport Stability at 2–8°C	6 -
Haemolysis interference	No

Clinical Interest

The **blood alcohol concentration (BAC)** is a measure of the concentration of ethanol (alcohol) in the blood. It has important clinical, legal and public health applications.

High levels of alcohol in the blood can cause symptoms ranging from euphoria and disinhibition to drowsiness, confusion, respiratory depression, coma and, in extreme cases, death.

The level of alcohol in the blood determines the **seriousness of the intoxication.** For example, a BAC of over 0.3 g/L is associated with a high risk of ethyl coma, while a BAC of over 4 g/L is potentially fatal. Although BAC alone is not sufficient to diagnose chronic alcoholism, repeated high levels may indicate excessive and problematic alcohol consumption, warranting further evaluation.

In patients undergoing treatment for alcohol dependence, regular BAC testing can help monitor abstinence and identify relapses. Values and interpretation:

- Blood alcohol level of 0.1 to 0.5 g/L: Mild euphoria, disinhibition.
- Blood alcohol level of 0.5 to 1.5 g/L: Impaired coordination, slowed reflexes, impaired judgement.
- Alcohol levels of 1.5 to 3 g/L: Confusion, drowsiness, unsteady gait, vomiting.
- Alcohol levels of 3 to 4 g/L: Possible alcohol-induced coma, respiratory depression.
- Alcohol levels > 4 g/L: Risk of death from respiratory depression and cardiovascular collapse.

PATIENT INFORMATION

Clinical Information Required	-
Patient Collection Notes	-

COMMENTS & NOTES

LOINC Code	859-0, 74859-0, 5639-0
Outwork	No