

Understanding Your Lab Results

We have included several resources that can help you to understand your lab results. We recommend that you read these resources. If you have questions, please contact the Michigan Chemical Exposure Monitoring (MiChEM) project team at 844-464-7327 or MDHHS-michem@Michigan.gov.

WHAT CAN I LEARN FROM THE MiChEM PROJECT ABOUT CHEMICALS IN MY BODY?

As a participant in the MiChEM project, you are receiving results for the 197 chemicals our laboratory tested in your blood and urine. You will see results for all of the chemicals unless you chose to only receive some of them. We are also including information on how you might have come in contact with these chemicals and ways you can reduce your chance of exposure.



Most people have chemicals in their blood and urine. You can compare your lab results to the results of other United States (U.S.) adults. Information on how to compare your lab results to other U.S. adults can be found in the enclosed “What are Percentiles?” factsheet.

We reviewed each of your lab results and if there were any MDHHS recommended specific follow-up actions based on them, such as sharing them with your health care provider, we will have already called you and sent a letter. Also, we may have called you to ask additional questions to better understand potential sources of chemical exposure. Most lab results do not have specific follow-up actions, so not every participant will have received a phone call or letter.

WHAT CAN MY LAB RESULTS TELL ME?

Your lab results **can** tell you:

- The amount of chemicals measured in your blood and urine at the time they were collected.

Your lab results **cannot** tell you:

- The source of any of the chemicals in your blood and urine.
- About any chemicals we did not measure.
- If the chemicals we measured are currently harming your health, have harmed your health in the past or may harm your health in the future.



CAN THE AMOUNT OF A CHEMICAL IN MY BODY CHANGE OVER TIME?



Yes. The amount of a chemical in your body depends on many things like how much contact you have with the chemical, how often that contact occurs and how long it takes for your body to remove it. Your lab results show what was in your blood and urine on the day of your appointment. If your contact with these chemicals changes in the future, the amount in your blood and urine may change. See the frequently asked questions (FAQs) for information on how you may have been exposed to each chemical.

WHY DID THE MiChEM PROJECT MEASURE CHEMICALS IN BOTH URINE AND BLOOD?

When chemicals enter your body, they pass to different organs. Organs break down and remove different chemicals in different ways. Since your body handles chemicals in different ways, a chemical may be found in your blood, urine or both. This also means it is not unusual to have different amounts of a chemical in your blood and urine.

WHAT COULD MY RESULTS MEAN FOR OTHER MEMBERS OF MY HOUSEHOLD?

Depending on the source of your exposure, other members of your household may come in contact with chemicals, too. For example, household members are likely to drink the same water and breathe the same dust. Another example, even when only one person does a job or hobby involving a chemical, the chemical may get into the air or dust of a home. Other household members can then come in contact with the chemical in the home's air or dust.

Also, if a person has chemicals in their body during pregnancy or while breastfeeding, chemicals can enter their baby's body. Note, the benefits of breastfeeding are usually greater than the risks from chemicals. People should talk with their health care provider to determine what is best for them and their baby.

Some actions you can take to reduce your exposure to chemicals can benefit other members of your household. You can find information about how people are exposed to the chemicals we measured and potential ways to reduce exposure in the Frequently Asked Questions sheets provided with your results.

If household members are concerned about past or current exposure to chemicals, one of the most important things they can do to protect their health is to have routine check-ups with their health care provider.

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