

# Tacrolimus (Prograf®)

## Blood Level Monitoring Information

For Patients With Kidney Disease

If you take a medication called tacrolimus (Prograf) to treat your kidney disease, your kidney care team may ask you to have blood work done at a lab to check your blood levels. This lab test is sometimes called “tacrolimus (Prograf) blood level monitoring” or a “tacrolimus (Prograf) level”. This should be done 12 hours after your last dose of tacrolimus (Prograf).

### Why is it important to check my tacrolimus (Prograf) blood levels?

- Your kidney care team needs to check your blood level to **ensure that the right amount** of tacrolimus (Prograf) is in your body and to **determine the right dose for you**.
- The goal is to **find the right dose that is effective in treating your disease** while reducing the risk of side effects.

### When should I get bloodwork drawn and when should I take my next dose?

- The lab should draw your blood work **12 hours after your last tacrolimus (Prograf) dose**. For example, if you took your last dose at 9 p.m. the night before you need blood work, then go to the lab the next morning to get blood work drawn at around 9 a.m. **Do not** take your scheduled tacrolimus (Prograf) dose until **after** the blood work has been drawn.
- There are a few ways to try to have your blood work done on time. If possible, **book an appointment at the lab, or arrive 15 minutes before the required time** and tell the lab staff that you need a timed test.

### What if I am not able to get bloodwork drawn on time?

- If the lab could not complete your blood work at the required time, tell your kidney care team that the blood work was drawn later or earlier than required.
- If the lab is closed when it is 12 hours from your last dose, speak with your kidney care team for recommendations on when to get blood drawn.

### What do I need to do to prepare for a tacrolimus (Prograf) level?

- To help make sure the tacrolimus (Prograf) test result is accurate, **take all your tacrolimus (Prograf) doses on time** in the five days before your blood work.
- You can eat before a tacrolimus level. If you must fast because you are also having other blood work that requires fasting (for example, a fasting blood glucose test) at the same lab visit, you can still do your tacrolimus level.

### Where should I get blood work drawn for a tacrolimus (Prograf) level?

- You can have the test done at your hospital lab or at a community lab (e.g., LifeLabs or Dynacare).
- If you go to a community lab, there may be a charge for the test.
- Talk to your kidney care team about what may be best for you.

To learn more about Ontario Health, The Ontario Renal Network, please visit [renalnetwork.on.ca/](https://renalnetwork.on.ca/)

ORN gratefully acknowledges the contributions of the ORN GN Drug Access Task Group, the ORN GN Patient and Family Panel, and the ORN GN Priority Panel in preparing this handout. This handout is provided for informational purposes only. It is meant to supplement a discussion with your healthcare team. Please contact a pharmacist or other health care professionals if you have any further questions regarding this medication.

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