

# Ordering of blood tests by the advanced musculoskeletal physiotherapists at st vincent's hospital melbourne emergency department

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The Advanced Musculoskeletal Physiotherapists (AMP) in Emergency Department (ED) independently assess and manage patients with musculoskeletal injuries/pain. They are a skilled addition to the ED workforce, capable of making complex decisions regarding the best clinical management of patients with musculoskeletal injuries who present to the ED within the Australian Triage Scale ranges of category 3-5. Some patients seen by the AMP present with symptoms that have a high suspicion of underlying inflammatory cause, suspected cancer or infection, or require preoperative planning or certain imaging. In order to minimise the need for multiple consultations with ED doctors in the busy ED environment and to ensure patients receive timely access to appropriate investigations, thus avoiding an unnecessarily long ED length of stay, AMPs practicing in the St Vincent's Hospital Melbourne ED have been approved to sign a pathology request if clinically appropriate and necessary to ensure best patient care.

The approved hospital guideline provides an expected standard for the ordering of blood tests by the PCP in the St Vincent's Hospital Melbourne ED. Pathology tests included are full blood exam, urea and electrolytes, C-reactive protein, erythrocyte sedimentation rate and urinalysis.

It is the overall responsibility of the AMP to ensure that an ED Physician, or inpatient unit doctor has interpreted all blood results prior to any management decisions regarding a patients care and to document the same in the medical record.

Credentiailling for physiotherapists able to request pathology tests include at least seven years of post graduate work experience, postgraduate physiotherapy qualifications, completion of specific learning tasks, completion of the wider AMP ED competency Learning and Assessment Framework and demonstrated competence with pathology guidelines.