

Glucose

This is a measure of the sugar (or glucose) level in your blood. High values are associated with eating before the test, and with diabetes.

The normal range for a fasting glucose is 60 -109 mg/dl. According the 2003 ADA criteria, diabetes is diagnosed with a fasting plasma glucose of 126 or more. A precursor, Impaired Fasting Glucose (IFG), is defined as fasting glucose levels of 110 - 125. Sometimes a glucose tolerance test, which involves giving you a sugary drink followed by several blood glucose tests, is necessary to properly sort out normal from IFG from diabetes.

Be aware that individual labs have varying normal reference ranges. Also, Europeans tend to use a 2-hours-after-eating definition of diabetes rather than a fasting glucose, which tends to increase the number of people who are classified as having diabetes.