

OBTAINING TROUGH BLOOD LEVELS

Your doctor or nurse has requested that you go to your local doctor's office, lab or hospital to have blood drawn for a medication drug level.

A drug level measures the amount of medicine in your blood.

Other blood work may be done at the same time. Different tests are done based on which seizure medicine you take.

Doctors usually want a TROUGH medication level of your medicine. The blood level increase after you take your medication, as it goes into your blood and then falls after several hours, as your body eliminated the drug. The TROUGH level is obtained at the time when the blood level is at its lowest. The TROUGH blood level is usually in the morning just before you take your morning dose because it has been many hours since your evening dose was taken.

Follow these instructions to have a **TROUGH** level drawn:

1. Take your evening dose as usual the night before your blood is drawn.
2. Go to the lab **BEFORE** taking your morning dose of seizure medicine. After your blood is drawn, take your seizure medication.
3. Please ask the lab to fax the results to our clinic: 434-982-0606. If the blood work is ordered by a physician outside of UVA, then also ask the doctor/nurse ordering the blood work to fax it to the clinic. It is helpful to remind the lab.
4. Some results may not be received for 7 days (for example, Topamax, Trileptal, Lamictal and Keppra). Other drug levels are usually received within 24 hours (Depakote, Phenobarbital and Dilantin).

It is important that you do not have blood drawn after taking your morning dose of medicine unless instructed to because the results may be inaccurate and the test may need to be repeated.

Our clinic's fax is 434-982-0606; phone number 434-924-5401