

Recommendations for using CRP and ESR

Simultaneous measurement of CRP and ESR is **rarely** required

Question	CRP	ESR	Comments
Screening asymptomatic patients?			Unlikely to be useful
I know this patient is ill but I don't know why.	✓		Actual level of CRP helpful
Could this patient have a significant bacterial infection?	✓		CRP good, ESR slow response
Could the patient have post-op infection?	✓		CRP good, ESR slow response
Has the infection responded to this antibiotic?	✓		CRP good, ESR slow response
Is this RTI more serious than it seems?	✓		Level of CRP useful
Is this patient responding to a trial of steroid therapy?	✓		CRP good, ESR slow response
Does this patient have PMR?	✓	✓	PMR with a normal ESR occasionally occurs
Monitoring PMR	✓		CRP more sensitive indicator of activity
Does this patient have temporal arteritis/GCA?	✓	✓	GCA with a normal ESR occasionally occurs
Monitoring temporal arteritis/GCA?	✓		CRP more sensitive indicator of activity
What is the cause of this/these inflamed joints?	Little use	?	Must be interpreted in clinical context
Monitoring Rheumatoid arthritis	✓		CRP better measure of the disease activity
Monitoring SLE?	✓	✓	CRP usually normal during flare, but elevated in infection
Why is the platelet count elevated?	✓	✓	Many different causes which may include inflammation
Prediction of cardiovascular disease	?		Role not yet established