Red Blood Cell Count (RBC) Lab Values

Red blood cells (RBC), also known as erythrocytes, contain hemoglobin and are responsible for carrying oxygen from the lungs to the tissues, where oxygen and carbon dioxide are exchanged. Men typically have a higher RBC count than women. These values can be falsely high or low depending on the patient's fluid status and should be interpreted carefully. An increased RBC count may be seen in patients who live in a high altitude or in those with polycythemia. Loss of red blood cells due to factors like bleeding, dietary deficiencies, and bone marrow failure can also lead to a condition called anemia.



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Women: 3.5-5.5 million cells/ MuL

Woman with (3) Tree and (5) Hand to (5) Hand and (5) Hand

A healthy woman should have a RBC count between 3.5 - 5.5 million/µL, which is expected to be lower than the value seen in males.

Men: 4.3-5.9 million cells/ MuL

Man with (4) Fork and (5) Hand to (5) Hand and (9) Lives-cat

Men typically have a higher RBC count, compared to women, due to greater overall muscle and bone mass, which requires more oxygen. In a healthy male, the RBC count should be between 4.3 - 5.9 million/µL.

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