TEST: **PROLACTIN**

**PRINCIPLE:**
Prolactin is released from the anterior pituitary under the inhibitory control of dopamine, which is secreted from the hypothalamus. When isolated from pituitary tissue, blood or amniotic fluid, prolactin has been found to exist in a number of molecular weight forms and has some structural similarities with human growth hormone. Prolactin plays a major role in the initiation and maintenance of lactation, where there is a physiological elevation of circulating concentrations. Pathological hyperprolactinemia occurs in hypothyroidism and renal failure. Hyperprolactinemia is also known to impair gonadal function in both sexes. Women may present with amenorrhea while men may suffer from impotence.

**SPECIMEN REQUIREMENTS:**
2ml serum collected in a red top tube with no additive or in a serum separator tube (gel barrier). Serum should be separated from the clot as soon as possible to avoid hemolysis. Store/transport sample at room temperature (15-30°C) for no longer than 8 hours or at 2-8°C for up 48 hours. If testing is further delayed, sera should be frozen at -20°C or lower. Avoid repeat freeze-thaw cycles.

**METHOD:**
Enhanced Chemiluminescence.

**REFERENCES:**

**Normal Range:**
- **Female Premenopausal (<50 years of age):** 3.34-26.72 ng/ml
- **Female Postmenopausal (=>50 years of age):** 2.74-19.64 ng/ml
- **Male:** 2.64-13.13 ng/ml

**Turnaround time:** 3 days