

New blood test for autism criticized as ‘not appropriate’ for clinical use

Doctors can now order a blood test that its makers say may help flag autism, but experts say the test is not appropriate for use in clinics. The test may even delay children’s diagnoses, according to one expert, and at an added expense to parents.

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The test is intended to identify children as young as 18 months who should be evaluated for autism, not to diagnose them with the condition. Clinicians would send a child’s blood sample to [testing company] Stemina, which would then return the results within two weeks. The test results are scored only as ‘positive’ — flagging the child for further evaluation — or ‘negative.’ A negative result doesn’t preclude a child from having autism, however, so parents would still need to follow up with a specialist.

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“Getting the answer from us through our test is a starting point, not an ending point in terms of the diagnosis,” [says Stemina chief executive officer Elizabeth Donley.]

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Stemina’s website says the test identifies about 30 percent of children with autism overall, but this figure is based in part on unpublished data, according to the company’s officials.

Read full, original post: [Researchers pan blood test for autism as premature for clinical use](#)