

ABG Quick Approach

A concise acid-base interpretation checklist

Stepwise approach

- Check pH: acidemia or alkalemia.
- Identify the primary respiratory or metabolic process from PaCO₂ and bicarbonate.
- Assess whether compensation is appropriate.
- If metabolic acidosis is present, calculate anion gap when relevant.
- Look for mixed disorders rather than forcing one diagnosis.
- Interpret oxygenation with the inspired oxygen and clinical context.
- Check lactate and electrolytes when clinically relevant.

ABG interpretation should be integrated with the patient, pulse oximetry, ventilation status, electrolytes and treatment already given.

Important: This resource is for general education and does not replace an individual medical consultation. Seek urgent medical care for severe, rapidly worsening or emergency symptoms.