



P03C0

Cylinder 5 Pressure Sensor Circuit High

P03C0 indicates that the powertrain control module has detected an abnormally high voltage signal from the cylinder 5 pressure sensor circuit, which is used to monitor combustion pressure for that specific cylinder. The computer expects the sensor signal to stay within a calibrated range, and a high reading means the circuit is either shorted to voltage, the sensor has failed, or the wiring is damaged.

SYSTEM	CODE TYPE	SEVERITY	FIX DIFFICULTY	AREA
Powertrain	Generic (all makes)	Medium	Intermediate	Ignition system and misfire

Symptoms you may notice

- Illumination of the check engine light, often with no other noticeable symptoms
- Rough idle or misfire sensation, especially under load
- Reduced engine power or limp mode in some vehicles
- Poor fuel economy due to incorrect fuel delivery calculations
- Intermittent hesitation or stumble during acceleration
- Failed emissions test due to increased exhaust emissions

Common causes, most likely first

- 1 Faulty cylinder 5 pressure sensor internally shorted
- 2 Damaged or chafed sensor wiring shorted to voltage
- 3 Corroded or loose electrical connector at the sensor or PCM
- 4 PCM internal fault causing incorrect signal interpretation
- 5 Water intrusion or contamination in the sensor connector
- 6 Aftermarket or incorrect sensor installed previously

How to diagnose and fix it

- 1 Perform a visual inspection of the cylinder 5 pressure sensor and its wiring harness for obvious damage or corrosion
- 2 Use a scan tool to check live data for the cylinder 5 pressure sensor signal and compare with other cylinders
- 3 Disconnect the sensor and measure reference voltage and ground at the connector with a digital multimeter
- 4 Check for continuity and short to voltage on the signal wire between the sensor and PCM
- 5 Swap the cylinder 5 pressure sensor with a known-good sensor from another cylinder to see if the code moves
- 6 If wiring and sensor are good, test the PCM for proper operation and reprogram or replace if necessary
- 7 Clear codes and perform a road test to verify the repair



Cylinder pressure sensor circuit pitfalls

- A high voltage code often results from a short to voltage in the signal wire, which can be caused by a pinched harness near hot exhaust components.
- Some technicians replace the sensor without checking the connector, but corroded terminals can create high resistance that mimics a sensor failure.
- The cylinder 5 pressure sensor is sometimes integrated into the glow plug or injector, so a high circuit code may actually indicate a fault in that combined component.
- In rare cases, a failing PCM driver can hold the signal line high, so always verify the PCM is not the culprit before replacing parts.
- This code can set intermittently due to vibration or thermal expansion, so wiggle-test the harness while monitoring live data.

Can I keep driving with P03C0?

Driving with P03C0 is generally safe for short distances, but avoid heavy acceleration or towing because the engine may misfire or enter limp mode. Prolonged driving with a misfire can damage the catalytic converter, so schedule diagnosis soon.

Tools that help

- OBD-II scan tool with live data capability
- Digital multimeter
- Wiring diagram for the specific vehicle
- Basic hand tools for connector and sensor access
- Oscilloscope for advanced signal analysis

Reading P03C0

P	Powertrain: engine, transmission and emissions.
0	Generic (SAE) code: it means the same thing on every OBD-II vehicle.
3	Ignition system and misfire.
C0	The exact fault within that area.

Often seen with

P0205 Injector Circuit/Open - Cylinder 5 · **P0300** Random/Multiple Cylinder Misfire Detected · **P0305** Cylinder 5 Misfire Detected · **P03BF** Cylinder 5 Pressure Sensor Circuit Low · **P03C1** Cylinder 5 Pressure Sensor Circuit Intermittent/Erratic



See it working

Watch the animated explainer [How a Supercharger Works: Roots Blower in X-Ray](#) on Auto Veteran to see the parts involved moving.

Full guide, related articles and animations: <https://www.autoveteran.tech/dtc-codes/p03c0/>

