CLINICAL LABORATORY TESTING: Life Saving Medicine Starts Here

▶ Evidence-Based Medicine: Clinical laboratory tests guide more than 70% of all medical decisions made by health care providers
Clinical laboratory tests provide objective information on the functioning of the human body, so that patients can be diagnosed, treated, or monitored precisely and as quickly as possible. The information furnished by these tests, which are performed on a patient’s tissues or fluids, provides the necessary data for physicians to make informed decisions—influencing more than 70% of medical decision-making.

▶ Cost-Saving Medicine: Clinical laboratory tests save time, costs, and lives by enabling early detection & prevention of disease
Lab tests cut costs by enabling early identification, monitoring, and prevention of disease. More than 7 billion tests are performed in the U.S. each year, providing critical data for a relatively small expenditure.

▶ Personalized Medicine: Clinical laboratory tests tailor patient care to meet individual needs & improve quality of care
The future of health care is personalized medicine which, guided by clinical lab testing, can improve the quality of care we provide to our patients. Clinical lab tests enable physicians and patients to identify disease and begin treatment earlier than ever before, detect disease before symptoms occur and utilize preventive strategies to avoid more intensive care approaches. Clinical lab testing allows diagnosis and treatment to be more precise and targeted, rather than a random or scattershot approach, and is much more efficient for the patient, clinician, and our health system. Genetic and genomic tests can provide information about the predictive risks of a disease that may be helpful in choosing among treatment alternatives.

▶ Localized Medicine: Most clinical labs are regional & independent
Clinical laboratory tests are furnished in three distinct settings: independent laboratories, hospital laboratories, and physician office laboratories. The American Clinical Laboratory Association’s (ACLA’s) membership consists of local, regional and national independent clinical laboratories. Independent laboratories are laboratories that are not located in a hospital or physician office, and often perform tests, as ordered by health care providers, which are not available in other settings.

How do Lab Tests Impact Patients?
- Prevention
- Accurate diagnosis
- Early treatment
- Less invasive care
- Faster recovery
- Less disability
- Fewer relapses
- Slower disease progression
- Fewer complications
- More informed consumer
- Smarter utilization
How Lab Testing Works
Clinical laboratory testing plays an essential part in the delivery of quality health care. A physician or other clinician orders lab tests to diagnose, treat, manage, or monitor a patient’s condition. The process begins with the collection of a sample of blood, tissue, or other biological matter from the patient, which is then sent to the laboratory where it is uniquely identified and examined to make certain that it is appropriate for the testing ordered by the health care provider. Some tests are manually evaluated, while most are performed using technically advanced instrumentation. Labs employ teams of licensed, highly skilled medical professionals specially trained to perform the requested analyses. Once the testing is complete, the lab issues a report with the findings to the ordering clinician. And once the health care provider receives the lab results, informed decisions can be made as to most appropriate treatment for the patient.

Regulated Medicine: Clinical laboratory tests are strictly regulated
The safety and quality of medical laboratory testing are regulated in various ways, including state licensing, federal quality standards, and restrictions on the use and marketing of medical devices. Furthermore, the Clinical Laboratory Improvement Amendments (CLIA) provides stringent federal quality standards for all clinical laboratories.