

Get Your Labs Checked to Stay Healthy



Lab tests help you stay healthy. This handout explains how lab tests help you manage or prevent health problems, such as diabetes, kidney disease, or heart disease.



What is a lab test?

A lab test is a test of your blood or urine (pee) to see how your body is working. Results from lab tests tell your health care provider about your health.



Why should I get my labs checked?

Lab tests are health check-ups for your body. They can show if you have any health problems. This helps you know what to do to improve your health before problems get worse.



What lab tests do I need?

Your health care provider will tell you what tests you need based on your age, medical history, and risk factors. Some common lab tests for overall health include:

- A1C: A blood test for diabetes
 - Blood glucose (blood sugar): A blood test for diabetes
 - Cholesterol: A test of certain fats in your blood
 - Glomerular filtration rate (GFR): A blood test for how well your kidneys work
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How can I manage my lab tests and my health?

Below are some things you can do to help manage your health with lab tests.

- **Schedule regular visits with your health care provider.** They can make sure you get the lab tests you need.
- **Follow fasting instructions.** When you fast, you do not eat or drink before a test. Some tests only work if you follow the fasting instructions.
- **Understand your lab test numbers.** Talk to your health care provider about what the test results mean. Ask if your numbers are normal or show any problems.
- **Ask what you need to do next.** Your health care provider may ask you to make changes in your lifestyle. They may also change your medicines or ask for more lab tests.
- **Stay aware of your health.** Lab tests can help prevent health problems. Be sure to take your results seriously. If your loved ones help with your health, be sure to tell them about your results and health plans.



How can I learn more about lab tests and my health?

- Talk to your health care provider if you have any questions about the lab tests you need or have had.
- Get more health tips at diabetes.org/kidney.