



Getting the conversation started: Questions to ask your healthcare practitioner when laboratory testing is recommended

When testing is ordered, you should feel comfortable in finding out why the test needs to be done, how it will be done, and what your healthcare practitioner expects to learn from it.

Here are some examples of questions you might wish to ask your practitioner to get the conversation started:

- What information do you expect to gain from this test? How could it change the course of my care?
- What are the risks and benefits of testing?
- What are the risks and benefits of acting on the results (undergoing treatment)?
- What is the evidence that supports this screening and how does it fit my situation?
- What do I need to know or do before the test?
- What happens during and after the test?
- What are normal results? What do abnormal results mean?
- What factors may affect the results?
- What course of action may be next, after the test?
- If results are not normal what are the next steps?

This content is an excerpt from Lab Tests Online patient resource article, [Making Informed Decisions for Better Health](#).

About Lab Tests Online

[Lab Tests Online](#) is a peer-reviewed, patient-centered web resource on clinical laboratory testing. It is produced by [AACC](#) and is the result of a collaboration of professional societies representing the laboratory and medical communities. Since its launch in 2001, Lab Tests Online has helped millions of people learn about lab tests and discuss them more clearly with their healthcare practitioners.