



---

## Common Lab Tests

---

As part of a regular checkup, to get a diagnosis, or perhaps to provide a benchmark, one or more laboratory tests may be requested by doctors. Here is a list of the most common tests ordered and their purposes. These tests are done using blood samples, except where noted. For more detail, please check [www.labtestsonline.org](http://www.labtestsonline.org).

**Amylase** - If the patient has symptoms of a pancreatic disorder, such as severe abdominal pain, fever, loss of appetite, or nausea, this test may be ordered.

**ANA** - This test helps to diagnose lupus and to rule out certain other autoimmune diseases.

**aPTT (PTT)** - Most often ordered to help evaluate the patient's risk of excessive bleeding prior to a surgical procedure, or to monitor heparin anticoagulant therapy.

**A1C (Hemoglobin A1C or Glycohemoglobin)** - Used to monitor a person's diabetes and to aid in treatment decisions, this test is usually performed with the first diagnosis and then 2 to 4 times per year.

**BMP (Basic Metabolic Panel)** - A group of 7-8 tests used as a screening tool to check for conditions like diabetes and kidney disease. The patient may be asked to fast for 10 to 12 hours prior to test.

**CBC (Complete Blood Count)** - Determines general health and screens for disorders such as anemia or infections, as well as nutritional status and toxic substance exposure.

**CMP (Comprehensive Metabolic Panel)** - This group of 14 tests gives the doctor information about the kidneys, liver, and electrolyte & acid-base balance, as well as about blood sugar and blood proteins.

**Electrolytes (Electrolyte Panel)** - This test can be requested as part of a routine exam, and when the doctor suspects an excess or deficit of electrolytes (sodium or potassium) or an acid-base imbalance.

**ESR (Sedimentation Rate)** - The doctor may order this test to determine the cause of inflammation, or to help diagnose and follow the course of joint or muscle pain.

**Flu Tests** - Used to determine whether flu-like symptoms are due to influenza A or B, or to other causes. Testing may be done using a nasopharyngeal swab, nasal aspirate or wash, or a throat swab.

**Glucose** - Used to identify blood glucose levels, and to screen for, diagnose, and monitor diabetes, pre-diabetes, and hypoglycemia. If the patient is diabetic, glucose levels should be monitored up to several times a day.

**HCG** - Typically performed to confirm and monitor pregnancy, or if symptoms suggest