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LAB TESTS (Laboratory Blood Test, Blood work or lab evaluation)

Our medical assistants are trained and experienced at drawing blood. Blood specimens can be sent to our lab or the lab at Cedars-Sinai Medical Center for analysis of a full spectrum of cardiology-related laboratory tests as our doctors' deem is appropriate.

Drawing blood generally takes less than 5 minutes and routine results are usually available within 24 – 48 hours. Some specialized testing can take longer. In general, if lab work is considered significantly abnormal, you will be contacted by the doctor or our staff. If you wish to be contacted with even normal results for routine monitoring blood work, please let us know.

Reasons your doctor may want to perform lab tests

There are several reasons for your doctor to recommend blood work and some of them are*:

- If you are being evaluated for your risk of developing heart disease.
- If you have had a history of blockages in your coronary arteries, a history of a heart attack or risk factors for developing these blockages, blood work is done to determine if you need additional medications or a change in your diet or lifestyle.
- If you are on certain medications, to help determine the effectiveness, potential need to increase or decrease the dose and make sure your body is tolerating the medication.
- If you have symptoms to help determine your overall health condition.

*While these are the most common reasons, other reasons might obviously lead to appropriate testing.

HOW TO PREPARE FOR THE STUDY

No preparation is necessary. **You do not ever need to fast for blood work in our office!** (Although you can if you really want to. But why be hungry and cranky if you don't need to?) Cholesterol levels (lipid panel) traditionally were done on fasting patients because the bad cholesterol (LDL or low-density lipoprotein) level was calculated and not directly measured. As the calculation is dependent on triglycerides (a type of fat that is found in the blood), and triglycerides can go up after eating, the calculated LDL level could come back inaccurate. In addition, historically, research tests involving the measurement of a lipid panel would have patients fast to “standardize” things from patient to patient. So the tradition of fasting for lipid or cholesterol panels took hold.

However, our lab has been directly measuring LDL for years, meaning that even very elevated triglyceride levels do not lead to an inaccurate measurement. In addition, it is our doctors' belief, that you spend most of your day not fasting, and a random, non-fasting measurement of the blood is a more accurate measurement of what your cholesterol level really is in real life. In general, whether you fast or not, your lipid levels will still reflect your day-to-day dietary habits and this is what is most useful to our cardiologists.

Please take your usual medications unless instructed by your physician.

NOTE: Do not discontinue any medication without first talking with your physician.

If you have any questions about the above test that your doctor has recommended for you or you are scheduled for, please feel free to call our office at (310) 659-0714 or visit our website at www.CORMedicalGroup.com

Thank you