

BLOOD TEST FLOW CHART

BEFORE THE SPECIMEN COMES TO THE LAB



Step 1: You visit your doctor, who orders a laboratory test.



Step 2: The specimen is taken



INSIDE THE LABORATORY



Step 3: The specimen arrives at the laboratory.



Step 4: Qualified laboratory staff test your specimen.




YOUR LABORATORY REPORT




Step 5: The results go back to your doctor.




Step 6: Your doctor will discuss the meaning of the results with you.



PATHOLOGIST
Gives your doctor advice on the correct test to perform on you.



PATHOLOGIST
Runs the diagnostic laboratory.
Guides and assists with laboratory testing.
Reviews the final results before releasing the report.



PATHOLOGIST
Notifies your doctor of urgent results.
Assists your doctor with interpreting the results if needed.
Gives advice to your doctor on treatment.

PATHOLOGISTS · PATOLOE

Drs Du Bulsson, Kramer, Swart, Boucher Inc./Ing.



Your consulting pathologists

UNDERSTANDING PATHOLOGY



Your consulting pathologists



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UNDERSTANDING PATHOLOGY:

WHO ARE PATHOLOGISTS AND WHAT HAPPENS IN THE LABORATORY?

INTRODUCTION

Most South Africans have a laboratory test shortly after they are born. From then on we rely on laboratory tests to prevent, diagnose and treat infections, chronic diseases such as diabetes and heart disease, cancers, allergies and a multitude of other medical conditions. It is estimated that laboratory tests influence about 70% of all treatment decisions made by a doctor and thus pathologists and the laboratory form an integral and essential part of delivering timely, high quality medical care.

The purpose of this pamphlet is to give you an overview of our role as medical specialists and the value of the medical services we offer, as well as what happens after a specimen has been collected from you for a particular laboratory test.

WHO ARE PATHOLOGISTS?

Pathologists are medical doctors who have subsequently specialised for at least four years in pathology. Pathologists usually specialise in a particular field, for example, the study of blood diseases (a haematologist) or infectious diseases (a microbiologist). Pathologists study the causes of disease, how diseases affect your body and how they are diagnosed and treated. Pathologists typically work in and run laboratories but sometimes see patients directly as part of their work.

BEFORE THE SPECIMEN COMES TO THE LABORATORY

After seeing you, your doctor may decide that a laboratory test is needed. Specimens may be collected either by your doctor or by Ampath's qualified staff in a hospital or at an Ampath branch. Your doctor completes a request form, which is the referral to us as specialist pathologists. At the branch our staff will confirm your personal and medical aid details and the test(s) requested by your doctor. Various specimens can be sent to the laboratory for testing, such as blood, urine, swabs or tissue depending on

what test your doctor requested. Your doctor may consult with a pathologist before testing to get expert advice on which test is the most suitable one to perform.

WHAT HAPPENS INSIDE THE LABORATORY?

Depending on the test and how urgent the results are, your specimen may be tested in either a smaller hospital laboratory or sent to a larger, main laboratory. Tests on blood specimens are typically performed by medical technologists or medical scientists in a laboratory run and managed by pathologists.

The examination of tissue specimens (a biopsy) is performed directly by a pathologist. Pathologists play an active role in the laboratory by guiding and assisting the testing of the specimen to ensure quality results.

YOUR LABORATORY REPORT

All laboratory results and reports are checked by a pathologist and sent to your doctor, typically electronically and as a printed report. Any urgent results are discussed with your doctor to ensure appropriate treatment is implemented in the shortest possible time frame.

Your doctor can contact a pathologist at any stage to provide assistance with the interpretation of the test results or to obtain treatment advice. Your doctor will inform you of the test results either telephonically or in person, and discuss any abnormal results and diagnoses made. You are entitled to obtain a copy of your results in consultation with your doctor and can request these via our website.

HOW DO WE BILL FOR OUR SERVICES?

You will receive an Ampath pathology account for the tests requested by your doctor and performed by the laboratory. A price list is available at all our branches, so you can see the cost of your tests. You can also request a quote from the branch when you have your blood collected. For certain tests, the laboratory may need to perform additional tests that may not have been requested initially in order to make the correct diagnosis and to ensure that you receive the appropriate treatment.

If you belong to a medical aid, your account will be sent to them for payment. Medical aids may not always pay for a particular test or may require a co-payment for specific tests. The balance of any unpaid account will be sent to you if the account is not paid in

full by the medical aid. Kindly ensure that you are familiar with the pathology benefits provided by your medical aid.

Ampath has more than 150 pathologists working across South Africa, so even if we do not meet you face to face, please rest assured that your health and wellbeing is in good hands.

