



REFLEX TESTING

A More Thorough Option.

Introducing Reflex Testing

With the public focus on the COVID-19 pandemic, a practice called “reflex testing” is gaining a great deal of notoriety. But what is it? And what does it mean to you?

Put simply, reflex testing is an expansion of a medical diagnostic test that allows you and your

doctor to arrive at a more accurate diagnosis. But before we talk about how it works, let's first explore why it's necessary.

The Diagnosis Dilemma

When you are not feeling well, chances are that you just want to get treated and feel better as soon

as possible. After all, it's not the illness that you're feeling, it's the symptoms.

Unfortunately, symptoms alone are rarely enough information for medical professionals to form an accurate diagnosis of your. So many illnesses share symptoms that the only way to be sure is to perform diagnostic tests. And even then, there may be no conclusive answer.

This isn't to say that diagnostic tests don't work. They absolutely do. However, sometimes the results are inconclusive.

For example, it's not uncommon for a test to return a false result, either negative or positive. Occasionally, outside contamination in the collection process can skew or nullify results. It's also possible that a patient may have more than one illness at a time, which may also distort results. And then there's the fact that some diagnostic tests are only able to determine what illnesses AREN'T indicated, leaving medical professionals to diagnose deductively.

So while we want to rely upon testing to help determine the right course of treatment, it's sometimes hard to be sure. The only recourse medical professionals have is to order further tests, or treat from a potentially flawed diagnosis.

Reflex to the Rescue

Those extra tests are what's known as "reflex testing." It allows medical professionals to be more certain in their diagnosis so they can treat patients more effectively. And if it seems like a hassle to have to test and then test some more, you're right.

Because tests don't have to happen one after another. Reflex testing can be performed concurrently, and often with the same collected specimen.

Here's how it might work:

Let's say you are experiencing COVID-19-like symptoms. You're not sure how you may have been exposed, but you know you will need to let the people you have been in contact with if the result is positive. Because you have symptoms, you will want to get the right treatment no matter what.

So when you go to a testing facility you request to have your sample tested for other respiratory pathogens as well. You should do this before your sample is collected. This will allow the testing facility to perform multiple tests from the same specimen.

Not only does this save time in forming your diagnosis, but it helps you avoid having to return to the testing facility to have another sample collected for further testing.

And the results are almost certain to be more conclusive.

It's Always Better to Know

Fortunately, many insurance plans will and do cover reflex testing when requested by a physician.

If your insurance company will cover reflex testing, then there's really no reason NOT to look at the big picture when you are having diagnostic tests performed. Perhaps you might save your life, or perhaps you just save some time. It's always better to know more.

Talk to your medical professional about your reflex testing options the next time you need to get tested. You'll be glad you did.



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