


ASCLS
The American Society for Clinical Laboratory Science

Consumer Information Team

Introduction and Cases
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OBJECTIVES

- ▣ Describe how the ASCLS Consumer information team serves patients and their families and caregivers, as well as health care providers.
- ▣ Review protocol for responding to consumer questions effectively and without attempting to diagnose.
- ▣ Using actual consumer questions, interact with the speaker in formulating responses.

Consumer Information Web Page

- ▣ Started in October of 1999
- ▣ A group of 8 Clinical Laboratory Scientists, under the direction of Susan Leclair, agreed to use their expertise to answer questions submitted to the ASCLS website.

- ▣ The access was never publicized but was "findable" by most browsers.

Consumer Information Web Page

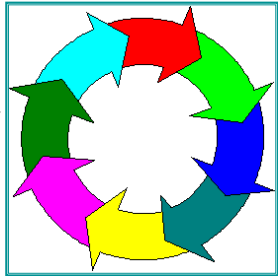
- ▣ Most of the 8 pioneers had expertise in hematology
- ▣ Winter of 2000
 - This group realized that they needed to expand the number of team members.
 - Due to a grant from the **ASCLS E&R Fund**
 - ▣ A training session was held
 - ▣ Legal consult present to answer questions
 - ▣ Over 20 different specialists attended
 - ▣ Additional personnel who could not attend were added to the fold.

Team Formation

- ▣ Between the original 8 members and an additional 20, 7 teams were formed to cover the 7 days of the week
- ▣ Through training and mentoring we now have expanded to **46** active members, as well as a few who have taken a sabbatical
- ▣ Each team includes a specialist from Chemistry, Hematology, Microbiology, Immunology and Immunochemistry

TEAMS of expert volunteers

- ▣ Teams
 - Chemistry
 - Hematology
 - Immunology/Immunochemistry
 - Microbiology

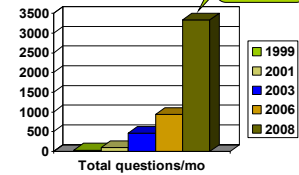


How do you find CI?

- This is the **first** interactive, non-subscription-based, international service for consumers
 - <http://www.ascls.org>
 - <http://www.labtestsonline.org>
- Available to consumers 24/7/365
- "Safe" environment

See how we have grown

- 1999: fewer than 1 question per day
- 2005: average of 15 questions per day
- 2009: average 80-125 questions day
- 2013: limit to 75 questions a day



LTO added an "Ask us" link on every page

2013 Limitation

- Overwhelming number of questions handled by volunteers who also maintain full time jobs forced us to limit number of questions to 75 per day.
- Once 75 questions have been submitted, consumer is asked to try again the next day.

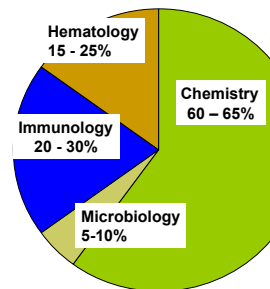
General information for consumers at ASCLS website

- General Introduction
- Why do you need a laboratory test?
- What are normal ranges or reference ranges?
- What can be tested?
- Who will perform your tests?
- What do you need to know before the test?
- How are specimens collected?
- When will the doctor have your test results?
- **Have a question about a laboratory test?**
 - Online lab testing information request form

Lab Tests on Line

- Often people find us through the Lab Tests Online.org site using the Ask Us (Ask a Laboratory Scientist) tab
- (<http://www.labtestsonline.org>)
- Disclaimer
 - The person is asked to read a short disclaimer about the service provided by ASCLS and then may submit a question.
 - Multiple opportunities to re-read disclaimer

What types of questions do we get?



Assignment to a team
Handle all of your discipline questions in that 24 hour period
Team decides how to handle "overlapping" questions

Who do questions come from?

- Not only consumers ask questions
- We get inquiries from:
 - Physicians and medical students
 - Physician assistants
 - Nurses and nurse practitioners
 - Pharmacists, Physical therapists, etc
 - Relatives and concerned friends of patients
- And sometimes obvious student assignments

Hematology most common questions

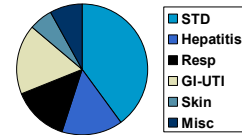
- WBC – low (most common) and high
- HCT – low and high
- Diffs – relative vs absolute values
- Indices
- MPV and RDW
- ESR – the most diagnostic test of all
- PT/INR and Coumadin therapy
- D-dimer
- Factor V Leiden, Proteins C and S
- Lupus anticoagulant

Chemistry Common questions

- Lipid panels
- CMP
- Enzymes
- Hormones
- Thyroid
- Tumor markers
- Hemoglobin A1C

Microbiology Common questions

- Infectious diseases
 - Risk of transmission
- Specimen collection
- Interpretation
 - Cultures
 - Antibody levels
- Treatment
- Lately, Lyme disease



Immunology Common questions

- ANA
- RF or RA
- Complement
- Thyroid antibodies
- Anti-phospholipid antibodies
- Celiac disease

EXAMPLES OF QUESTIONS/CASES

Worried mother

- My son is a 5 years and 3 month old boy. His segs is too low and his lymphs is too high. He did not have any symptoms when I brought him for the blood test. I am really concerned. Do you think he may have leukemia?



Good teaching material

- RBC 3.69 x 10⁹/L (4.1-5.1)
- HCT 24.1% (35-47)
- HGB 7.3 g/dL (10.9-15)
- MCV 66.2 fL (80-100)
- MCHC 30.3 g/dL (33-36)
- Fe 2.7mmol/L (6.6-26)
- Ferritin 3 µg/L (30-180)
- I have been very tired and all I want to do is to eat ice. What do you think my problem is?
Fatigé

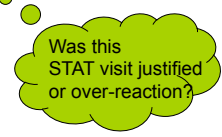
What is your assessment?

A chance to educate with each answer

- Thank you for contacting the American Society for Clinical Laboratory Science(ASCLS).
- Again, thank you for using the ASCLS Consumer Information Web Page. As a member of this profession, I am pleased to represent clinical laboratory scientists who perform millions of laboratory tests yearly. The clinical laboratory is composed of several sub-specialty areas: Chemistry, Hematology, Immunology, Microbiology, and Transfusion services and provides over 70% of the objective data that physicians need for accurate diagnosis and treatment.

Scary, but with a happy ending...

- I had been on coumadin for a month without any monitoring. I wanted to get off, so the doctor ordered an INR. It came back 11.1 and he called me at work to come right to his office for a shot of vitamin K.

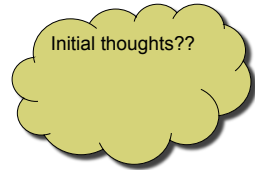


Some questions are fairly easy- and some more complicated

- FAIRLY EASY**
 - What is thrombosis?
 - Why would my physician suggest that I take a baby aspirin every day??
- NOT SO EASY**
 - My daughter has been diagnosed with **Klippel Treunaunay Syndrome**. Her doctor wants to start her on Coumadin. How does that relate to KTS?
 - My baby has been diagnosed with **Kawasaki Syndrome**. Is it usual for the platelet count to approach 1 million?

From a health care provider in India

- My patient have the platelet count 6000/µL. Child age is 7 Yrs. One day before there is a small bleeding in the Nose. Please seggest a remedy.



Low absolute neutrophil count

- I am a 60 year old male. I had some sciatic nerve pain, so asked for a test for vitamin B₁₂ which was within limits. However my CBC showed the following abnormalities: WBC 1.9, HGB 13.9, platelets were low normal. I looked back over the past 6 years and my WBC has consistently dropped from 3.8 to 1.9 and on my most recent CBC it is 1.0. My platelets and HGB have remained stable. I have no symptoms, except occasional night sweats. Should I be concerned?

What do you think?

Factor V Leiden Mutation

- I am homozygous for Factor V Leiden and heterozygous for MTHFR C677T. My two sons' testing came back with 2 copies of the A1298C mutation and their factor V activity levels were approximately 126-140%. Does that make me C677T/A1298C? What is the thrombotic risk for my sons?

<http://www.fritsmafactor.com>

This is a foreign language to me

- I was found to have an elevated APTT in pre-op screening. I have never had any bleeding problems. I was told that I have a lupus anticoagulant as evidenced by the positive hex phase study, elevated ACAs and inhibitory pattern in multiple factor levels. I was told that because of the lupus anticoagulant that I might be at increased risk of post-op thrombotic episodes. **What does all this mean in plain English?**

When is fasting really fasting??

- Patient #1 My doctor is having me go for some lab tests that require a 12 hour fast. I think that means no eating for 12 hours, but how about liquids? Is water OK? Orange juice? Coffee?
- Patient #2 If I have a low blood sugar level while needing to fast for a Doctor ordered lab blood test for sugar, does taking glucose tablets prior to going to the lab to draw blood violate the fasting requirement?

COOPERATION

- There is a great deal of cooperation among members of our team. Patients (consumers) benefit from collaborative expertise and members of the team are enriched by the detail that each other provides.

Getting Interested??

- What is it worth to you?
 - You get 1 CEU towards your continuing education requirement every year.
 - You join a unique group of people who are
 - Creating a new awareness of clinical laboratory science across the world
 - Actually, really, *honestly* saving lives
 - Some of the best friends you will ever have

Want to get involved?

- Contact Bunny at brodak@iupui.edu OR
- Contact Dr. Susan Leclair, our noble founder, at sleclair@umassd.edu
 - She will send you a copy of an orientation manual and hook you up with a current member of the CI team.
 - The team member will be your mentor and guide you through the training period.

CI wants YOU!!!!

