

Editorial

“Laboratory Medicine” is essential:

Laboratory testing is an integral part of modern medical practice. Although clinical laboratory testing accounts for only 3.4% of annual health care costs in the Turkey, it plays a major role in the clinical decisions made by physicians, nurses, and other health care providers for the overall management of disease. More than 4500 laboratory tests are available for clinical use, and about 500 of them are performed regularly. The number of Clinical Laboratory Improvement Amedments (CLIA)- certified laboratories has grown to exceed more than 200,000. The laboratory medicine workforce comprises pathologists, doctoral level laboratory scientists, technologists, and technicians, who play a vital role in the health care system.

The health care system is increasingly dependent on reliable clinical laboratory services; however, as part of the overall health care system, these laboratory evaluations are prone to errors. Laboratory medicine comprises more than just the use of chemicals and reagents for the measurement of various analytes for clinical diagnosis purposes. Interference by both endogenous and exogenous substances is a common problem fort he test analysis. These substances play a significant role in the proper interpretation of results, and such interference is advers to patient care and adds to the cost of health care. It would be an oversimplification to conclude that each variable will always produce a specific effect; it depends on the person, the duration of exposure to that variable, the time between initial stress, the sample collection, and the degree of exposure.

Awareness that many factors occuring outside the laboratory in and around the patient may affect the test result before the sample is collected is very important. These factors can be minimized when the clinician takes a good history and when there is a good communication of such information between the laboratory and the physcian.

Editor in Chief

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