

SUMMIT

Naturopathic News

Functional Lab Interpretation

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Often times lab work is taken at face value, with attention paid only to values flagged by the lab as outside the “normal” range. “Normal” ranges for blood-work results have changed over the years, but unfortunately, not always for the better. Have you ever been told that “it all looks normal”, but you still don’t feel right? Based on information from standard lab work you may already have, we offer a comprehensive report to monitor health & wellness with a “healthy” homeostatic range, not just “normal” ranges, for cardiovascular risk factors, blood sugar levels, liver, thyroid, kidney and immune system function among others. We offer a typed report alone, for a price to match 9-Health’s bargain, at ~~\$45.-~~

Many people have taken advantage of the below-wholesale price of lab work offered at the Channel 9 health fair held each April, and if not, a “health profile” from Summit Medical Center can be self-ordered for \$67. Then what do you do with the results? You can learn a lot from the internet, but a comprehensive visit with the NDs at the Mountain-River Clinic costs less than most people pay for one month of their insurance premium.

Are you in the healthy range? Your body is always doing its best to maintain homeostasis – a balance that is just right for health. Of the many values to look at closely, here are a few that you should know about:

Glucose: When your blood sugar (glucose) gets above 99 or below 80, you can end up with problems in the long run. A usual lab “normal” for glucose is 65-99 mg/dL, yet you can feel the effects of having blood sugar run too low, as well as too high. What starts out as dysglycemia (literally, “sugar imbalance in the blood”) can be the first step in a downward spiral toward diabetes type II. A healthy range would look more like 80-99 mg/dL.

Cardiovascular Risk Factors: People (and most doctors) automatically think of high cholesterol as a heart disease risk, but more important than that, are the levels and ratio of HDL and LDL, and additional tests homocysteine and CRP (C-reactive protein) which measure inflammation and the tendency for cholesterol to form plaques in the blood vessels. Cholesterol should be between 150-180 mg/dl to be healthy, not simply below 200 - because there are many clinical problems associated with cholesterol that is too low, in addition to too high. HDL is a carrier of cholesterol away from the tissues, and pulls cholesterol out of plaque. HDL is “good cholesterol”. So good, the higher the number goes, the lower the risk of heart disease. HDL should be between 55-120 mg/dl instead of the American “normal” of around 40-60. LDL carries cholesterol to the tissues, depositing into plaque. LDL is considered “bad cholesterol” and a healthy range would be between 50-90 mg/dl instead of simply below 130.

Liver function: The liver is critically important as the body's key detoxification and filtration system for toxins, medicines, drugs, alcohol, microbes, antigen-antibody complexes and more. In addition, it controls blood sugar levels, synthesizes proteins, and maintains the balance of fats, hormones, vitamins and minerals in the body. When the liver cells are damaged, they will leak their enzymes into the bloodstream: ALT, AST, GGT, LDH, and alkaline phosphatase; along with byproducts like bilirubin and proteins like albumin and globulin. Incredibly resilient, the liver can regenerate its own tissue, and be very damaged before enzyme levels reach the radar screen of "abnormal" for America – above 45-50 for AST and ALT, and 65 for GGT. A healthy range would look more like 18-26 mg/dl for AST and ALT, and 10-36 mg/dl for GGT.

Thyroid function: The thyroid gland regulates body temperature (as close to 98.6°F as possible), the metabolism of every cell in the body, the synthesis of brain and nervous tissue, and the regeneration and growth of muscle, bone and other tissues. Most screens only include TSH (thyroid stimulating hormone), which is produced in the anterior pituitary and tells the thyroid gland how much thyroid hormone to put out. Given that most other things are working the way they should, TSH will go up as thyroid hormone levels go down. In the last 25 years the accepted "normal" upper limit for TSH has officially dropped from around 20 to 4.5 uIU/ml, which is about where local labs now have it set. Even this limit is too high, as current medical science does not support this, and hypothyroidism is a frequently missed diagnosis. In 2002 the American Association of Clinical Endocrinologists suggested that the upper range for a normal TSH be lowered to 3.0 uIU/ml, making a healthy range for TSH be around 0-3.0 uIU/ml.

If you run up against questions with lab work, give us a call any time. As NDs from nationally accredited 4-year graduate schools, we are your health and wellness experts who use herbs, nutrition, homeopathy and other natural means to treat you. We utilize the same diagnostic techniques as conventional MDs, and offer other screening tests through nationally certified labs: adrenal (stress) hormones, female (pre & post-menopause) and male hormones, salivary and stool antibodies and enzyme levels for digestive analysis, allergy antibody tests, and Dr. Nearpass offers PAP tests. .