



Hendricks Community Hospital strives to serve Hendricks and our surrounding communities. To inform our area patrons, we will be publishing topics in our area newspapers about the services and specialties we offer at our local level. Various topics will be covered throughout the next several months to ensure our community is provided with the best knowledge in making their healthcare choices. Our goal is that you enjoy reading more about the services we provide and feel more confident in your decision-making.

Diagnosis using Laboratory Services **By Kennedy Tesch**

Laboratory services are often used as part of a routine checkup to track changes in a patient's health. Laboratory tests can provide useful information to help doctors diagnose, plan a course of treatment, and monitor diseases. HCHA provides patients with a full-service lab including in-house and reference lab testing.

HCHA offers a balanced test menu that ranges from waived testing to high complexity testing. Waived testing is usually simple testing for illnesses such as strep and influenza, or to identify pregnancy. High complexity testing is for more complex lab testing medical issues such as prostate cancer, cardiac events, and diabetes.

Lab testing is the backbone of diagnostic information your provider needs to make medical decisions for your health. Labs are used as screening tests for a variety of conditions as well as the definitive answer to many other medical conditions. Lab results can determine if you have, liver failure, kidney failure, or types of cancer.

"Our motto is "Without the lab, you are only guessing", " said Kathy Harris, Medical Technologist and Supervisor. "We provide valuable information to the providers to assist them in diagnosing you."

HCHA has been able to stay ahead of the game and keep up on all the new instrumentation and technology offered in the laboratory field. Small facilities typically struggle to be able to keep up with new instrumentation given the price and availability. HCHA is fortunate have the support for state-of-the-art instrumentation and technology.

The lab department at HCHA is comprised of Kathy Harris, Medical Technologist and Supervisor; Kathy Wall, MLT; and Stephanie Zylstra, MLT. The small sized staff does everything from collecting the samples, running the tests, and consulting with providers when needed. The staff is also responsible for the maintenance on the instruments as well as calibration and verification of every test ran.

"Each of us has our own strengths and are committed to making sure we are producing accurate results that assist your provider in making the best decisions for your health," said Harris. "We take pride and ownership of this lab and work hard to make your experience a pleasant one. Our patients become like family and so we try to do the best we can for them."

We hope you find our HCHA Corner columns informative and educational. We'd like to do all we can to keep all of you healthy.