

Overcoming Analysis Paralysis: Laboratory and Diagnostic Test Interpretation



Course Description

What is the significance of an elevated mean corpuscular volume (MCV)? What does an elevated blood urea nitrogen (BUN) level with a normal creatinine level indicate? What is the diagnostic difference between ST depression and ST elevation? How does pregnancy affect fibrinogen or platelet levels?

This seminar will look at the answers to these and many other questions regarding laboratory and diagnostic tests. Participants will learn the significance of both the normal findings of numerous commonly ordered laboratory tests as well as the implications of various abnormalities. The course is loaded with case studies to bring laboratory abnormalities to life. Content will cover everything from hematology to chemistry studies, liver function tests to kidney function tests, as well as topics such as interpreting the urinalysis, the electrocardiogram and the chest X-ray. The effects of factors such as age and pregnancy will also be considered. This seminar is meant to enhance the practice of healthcare workers in all clinical areas, from critical care to medical-surgical, surgical services to rehabilitation services.

Key Learning Outcome

- After completing the program, 80% of participants will report an increase in knowledge that will positively impact their practice.

Program Objectives

This program prepares the learner to:

- Review four case studies with multiple laboratory results, and identify the significance of both normal and abnormal laboratory results in each case study.
- Identify abnormalities in chest X-rays presented during the seminar.
- Identify abnormalities in 2-Lead and 12-Lead electrocardiograms presented during the seminar, and identify the significance of those abnormalities.

Agenda

Sign-in begins at 7:30 am. Each day includes a one-hour lunch (on your own), as well as a morning and afternoon break of 15 minutes each. The order of lectures presented and break times may vary according to speaker preference.

Day 1, 8:00 am to 4:30 pm

Overcoming Analysis Paralysis: An Introduction to Laboratory Tests

Test Reliability | Reference Values | Critical Values | Phlebotomy

Untangling the Alphabet Soup of Hematological Studies

Blood Basics | Red Blood Cells | Hematocrit | Hemoglobin | Erythrocyte Indices | Anemia Case Study | Reticulocyte Count | Erythrocyte Sedimentation Rate | White Blood Cells | Hematology Case Study

The Positives and Negatives of Electrolyte Studies

Extracellular Electrolytes | Intracellular Electrolytes | Electrolyte Neutrality | Anion Gap | Overview of Cellular Membrane Activity | Serum Sodium | Serum Potassium | Serum Chloride | Calcium | Phosphorus

Minding Your “Pees” and “Q’s”: Renal Function Tests

BUN | Creatinine | BUN to Creatinine Ratio | Creatinine Clearance Test | Osmolality | Urinalysis | Renal Failure

More Alphabet Soup: Liver Function Tests

Alkaline Phosphate (ALP) | Gamma-Glutamyl Transpeptidase (GGT) | Alanine Aminotransferase (ALT) | Aspartate Aminotransferase (AST) | Summary Points and Memory Tips for Liver Function Tests | Serum Ammonia | Bilirubin | Albumin | Amylase and Lipase

Plugging Up the Mysteries of Coagulation Studies

The Clotting Process | Disseminated Intravascular Coagulation (DIC)

CSI: Culture and Sensitivity Investigation

Microbiology Overview | Culture and Sensitivity | Specimen Collecting Tips and Practical Application

Agenda

Day 2, 8:00 am to 4:30 pm

Arterial Blood Gas Interpretation for the ABG Challenged

Buffering of the Blood pH | Respiratory Acidosis | Respiratory Alkalosis | Metabolic Acidosis | Metabolic Alkalosis | Interpreting the Values with the H Method

It's All Shades of Gray to Me: Interpreting the Chest X-Ray

Chest Anatomy | Radiographic Imaging | Common Language for CXR | Standardized Approach

Testing Through the Ages

Pregnancy-Related Hormones | Urine Pregnancy Test | Serum Pregnancy Test | Normal Lab Variances, Blood Gases, Blood Glucose During Pregnancy | Gestational Diabetes | ABGs in Pregnancy | Geriatric Considerations

Cardiovascular Studies

Risk Factors | Cholesterol | C-Reactive Protein | Cardiac Enzymes | Natriuretic Peptides

Case Studies: Group Work

Squiggles and Squawks: Interpreting the 2- and 12-Lead ECG

Background of Electrophysiology | Interpretation in 5 Steps | Specific Rhythms | Practice Strips and Application

Review of Case Studies

Accreditation

RN/LPN/LVN/Other: 14 Contact Hours

MED-ED, Inc is accredited as a provider of nursing continuing professional development by the American Nurses Credentialing Center's Commission on Accreditation (**ANCC**).

MED-ED, Inc. is an approved provider by the following State Boards of Nursing: **Florida**/FBN 50-1286, **Iowa**/296, **California** #CEP10453.

If your profession is not listed, we suggest contacting your board to determine your continuing education requirements and ask about reciprocal approval. Many boards will approve this seminar based on the accreditation of the boards listed here.



© 2026 MED-ED, Inc. All rights reserved.