

# Column in laboratory medicine

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Laboratory medicine is conventionally defined as a branch of medicine encompassing the analysis of blood, urine and many other body fluids. The leading fields of laboratory medicine thereby encompass many analytical techniques such as clinical chemistry, immunochemistry, hematology, hemostasis, separation techniques, as well as molecular biology. Although it cannot be definitely established when and where the real history of laboratory medicine began, anecdotal evidence suggests that the practice of pouring urine on the ground and observing to see whether it attracted insects for diagnosing boils was commonplace in Greece, in the 400 BC. In the following centuries the analysis of body fluids, especially urine and blood, became widespread, but it was only at the dawn of the 20th century that laboratory medicine acquired the dignity of a “standalone” science, leading the way to outstanding improvements of managed care (1). Therefore, laboratory medicine is now considered an essential part of the clinical decision making, wherein results of *in vitro* diagnostic testing provide a substantial contribution for the screening, diagnosis, prognostication and therapeutic monitoring of the vast majority of human disorders (2).

Due to such an increasing importance of diagnostic testing in modern science and medicine, *Annals of Translational Medicine* will introduce a new category of manuscript, defined “Column of Laboratory Medicine”. The idea of the column is to provide a kaleidoscopic outlook and a quick update on hot-topics that signify a major advancement in the field. Basically, we are willing to give additional and critical insight on the topic, emphasizing the broader practical implications that may have not already

been originally provided. The style of these short pieces is tailored for a wider audience, thus providing explanations or definitions of technical terms, concepts, and assumptions specific to the topic that will be discussed, as well as personal interpretations and (hopefully) expert guidance on how translating such findings in the daily practice of diagnostic testing. The column will ultimately serve as a platform for experts/juniors to gather any interesting contents that may help increase knowledge, daily practice and quality in the field of laboratory medicine.

We really hope that this additional editorial effort may be of substantial interest for our readership.

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## Footnote

*Conflicts of Interest:* The author has no conflicts of interest to declare.

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