

Quick Access to Medical Test Results Allays 'Scanxiety'

LabFinder Leading 'eHealth' Revolution; Cardiologist and LabFinder Founder Dr. Robert Segal on the Value of Speedy Medical Test Results

NEW YORK, NY, UNITED STATES, March 9, 2023 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Researchers and clinicians term it "scanxiety," that anxiousness patients experience while awaiting days – even weeks sometimes – for medical test results concerning a potentially serious health issue. But an explosion in digital patient portals and a recent federal law requiring providers to give patients free and secure access to all information in their electronic medical records have markedly cut the bite-your-nails wait time. Many patients now can check results directly within a day or two following testing, according to [Robert Segal MD](#), co-founder and CEO of [LabFinder](#).

In fact, Dr. Segal, a renowned cardiologist, calls the move to "eHealth" by physician practices and clinical laboratories across the country "transformative" and says offering patients a direct and immediate gateway to their records via computer or smartphone empowers them to become much more engaged in their own health and medical decisions.

For that very reason – to make access to personal health information quick and simple and reduce patient anxiety and frustration, Dr. Segal developed LabFinder, an online scheduling platform for all patient laboratory and radiology appointments. The system connects patients, doctors, and lab and radiology centers for a seamless medical experience; offers timely test scheduling; and serves as one central repository for users' testing results. Most importantly, test results are released simultaneously to patient and clinician and are often available in as little as 24 hours – a digital feat that puts LabFinder in the vanguard of the "eHealth" revolution. Indeed, LabFinder was just named to the New York Digital Health 100, "a recognition that highlights the most exciting and innovative startups in the New York region," according to a news release posted in February 2023. (<http://bitly.ws/Bhrx>)



Dr. Robert Segal, Cardiologist and Co-Founder of LabFinder



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In a study published in a 2021 issue of the Journal of Medical Internet Research, authors write, “Patient portals have the potential to enhance the doctor-patient relationship, improve health status awareness, and increase adherence to therapy.” (<http://bitly.ws/BnT6>) Dr. Segal concurs. He points to an online blog, in which the writer discusses a “common [past] practice” of “delaying the release of lab and pathology results to patient portals for a certain period,” particularly if the information included the presence of abnormalities. “But because of

new federal requirements, many provider organizations are now removing those delays,” the writer adds.

“With patients gaining quicker access to information, we likely will be reading fewer online articles with headlines such as How to Ease Worry When Waiting for Medical Test Results and Coping While You Wait for Medical Test Results,” Dr. Segal says. However, he does express the concern of other clinicians that reports and messages placed in patients’ electronic files can be too steeped in “medicalese,” making the data at best difficult to interpret. “A significant gap often exists between patient literacy and information presented in medical or scientific terms,” Dr. Segal states.

Researchers writing in a 2020 edition of the Annals of Internal Medicine suggest “patients with limited health literacy and numeracy skills, along with those without extensive previous computer experience and older adults, [face] substantial barriers in using the portal interfaces.” (<http://bitly.ws/BhrV>) However, despite these observed challenges in usability, several self-report studies note that patients rate the [digital information] systems highly and express strong interest in using portals.”

Additionally provocative is the timing of release of medical test results, Dr. Segal states. For example, authors of a 2021 study in the British Medical Journal indicate mandates for quick digital access to “all test results, including imaging and pathology reports,” can potentially alert a patient to a diagnosis of cancer or other serious disorder before a scheduled doctor’s appointment and without the immediate benefit of a conversation or discussion with a physician. (<http://bitly.ws/Bhs2>)

“But scientists are finding patients would prefer receiving such information rather than waiting and wondering and that access to test results is empowering whether findings are negative or positive,” Dr. Segal says.

“Experience also shows most patients are respectful of physicians’ time and do not immediately begin calling physician offices after reading their medical reports.” He points to a Swedish study, published in the Health Informatics Journal, in which participating cancer patients say gaining

access to test results increases their sense of control, gives them a better understanding of their condition, enhances well-being, and actually decreases “scanxiety.” (<http://bitly.ws/Bhs8>) As one patient in this study states, “If we can manage [having cancer]... and living with [it], then we can handle reading about it.”

“Such findings are one reason why LabFinder supports release of test results to patients and their doctors at the same time,” Dr. Segal states. He offers these tips:

Take advantage of all the features offered by electronic portals. Portals not only allow quick access to medical data but simplify scheduling of doctor appointments, link patients to other appropriate health services, are available 24/7, and help patients track vaccinations and recommended preventive screenings, upload data from home-monitoring devices like blood-pressure cuffs and pay health-related bills.

Use the portal to share information with other physicians when seeking a second opinion.

Confirm and follow personal care plans described in the portal.

Readily send the doctor feedback or messages electronically.

“Most importantly, know that the information in electronic portals is secure and that the methods to access it are usually simple and clearly explained. Do not let fear, uncertainty, or negative attitude interfere with your taking full advantage of what digital information systems have to offer patients. If nothing else, they are great stress-reducers,” Dr. Segal says.

Bio: Robert Segal MD, board-certified in cardiovascular disease, echocardiography, and nuclear cardiology. He is founder of Manhattan Cardiology and Medical Offices of Manhattan, and Co-Founder of LabFinder. <https://manhattancardiology.com/>
<https://www.medicalofficesofmanhattan.com/> <https://www.labfinder.com/>

About: LabFinder is a consumer-facing platform that transforms the patient experience through seamless [lab testing & radiology imaging](#), guiding patients to conveniently located testing centers, handling appointment bookings, offering telehealth services, and allowing patients to review their test results all in one place. LabFinder supports patients through their care journey from booking to billing—reducing expenses, hurdles, and frustrations. www.labfinder.com.

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