Understanding Test Results for Infectious Diseases

Consider the likelihood of disease before performing laboratory testing

The likelihood that a patient has a disease depends on many factors:

- Has the patient been in an area where the disease is found?
- Does the patient have signs and symptoms typical of the disease?
- Does the patient have risk factors for contracting or developing the disease?

**DISEASE IS COMMON**

100 people tested for the disease‡

NEGATIVE TESTS

- True Negatives
- False Negatives

3% FALSE POSITIVE
1 of 40 people who tests positive does not have the disease

POSITIVE TESTS

- False Positives
- True Positives

1% FALSE NEGATIVE
1 of 60 people who tests negative has the disease

**DISEASE IS RARE**

100 people tested for the disease‡

NEGATIVE TESTS

- True Negatives
- False Negatives

0% FALSE NEGATIVE
None of the 97 people who tests negative has the disease

POSITIVE TESTS

- False Positives
- True Positives

67% FALSE POSITIVE
2 of 3 people who test positive do not have the disease

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