

CAREERS IN HEALTH

MEDICAL LABORATORY SCIENTIST

The Foundation of Diagnosis

What is a Medical Laboratory Scientist?

A Medical Laboratory Scientist (MLS), also called a Clinical Laboratory Scientist (CLS) or Medical Technologist, is an allied health professional who is the "disease detective" behind the scenes of healthcare. They perform complex analytical tests on blood, tissue, and body fluid samples using sophisticated technology to detect, diagnose, and monitor illness.

Diseases and Conditions

Medical Laboratory Scientists (MLS) perform critical testing across several laboratory disciplines to identify and track a wide array of health issues. In Microbiology, they isolate and identify infectious agents like bacteria and viruses to guide appropriate treatment. In Hematology and Immunology, MLSs diagnose blood cancers (like Leukemia), track clotting disorders, and ensure safe blood transfusions through meticulous typing and cross-matching.

Daily Work Life

A Medical Laboratory Scientist performs specialized testing across various departments. They work with a variety of complex equipment and must prioritize quality control to validate every result before it reaches a physician. Their duties include operating and troubleshooting high-precision instruments, performing manual microscopic examinations of blood and body fluid smears to detect abnormalities, and conducting highly sensitive molecular tests to identify genetic markers for disease.



Years of Training in the U.S.

- 4 years college
- additional 1 year of clinical internship

Necessary skills:

- **Technical Acuity:** Understand data and analysis
- **Attention to Detail:** Perform complex multi-step procedures
- **Critical thinking:** Troubleshoot & investigate
- **Stamina & Organization:** Labs often run 24/7 so need ability to stand and focus for long hours