
How Patients Feel About Early Access to Imaging Results



A new survey discovered that patients are overwhelmingly eager to receive access to their results from imaging exams. 8,139 respondents at 4 U.S. academic medical centres took part in the survey; 96% of respondents expressed their preference for access to the test results.

Although pilot studies suggested mixed responses regarding patient preferences about how and when to receive results, this recent survey was designed to better understand patient attitudes and preferences related to open results.

Regardless of whether the doctor offered clinical counsel, or the chance to discuss the results with the patient, the results showed that almost all participants preferred to view their results immediately.

Previous literature and efforts have highlighted the importance of data availability and transparency to enable and empower patients to manage their health care. Providing patients with the time to review, research and process their own test results means they might have extra time to prepare for subsequent discussions, and this may lead to better shared decision-making.

However, modelling results also showed that for patients who do not understand what the results show or they are seeing not normal results, they are at a higher risk of experiencing stress and negative emotions. Furthermore, 7.5% of respondents said they would worry more when reviewing results before a health practitioner contacts them. However, the survey showed that 95.3% of participants who received abnormal test results are interested in receiving immediately released results, as it allows them to choose where and with whom they can view their results.

The authors concluded stating, "As health care systems continue to navigate this new era of health information transparency, balancing patients' expectation of immediate access to their information with the need to manage increased worry and health care practitioner burden is increasingly important".

Source: [JAMA](#)

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