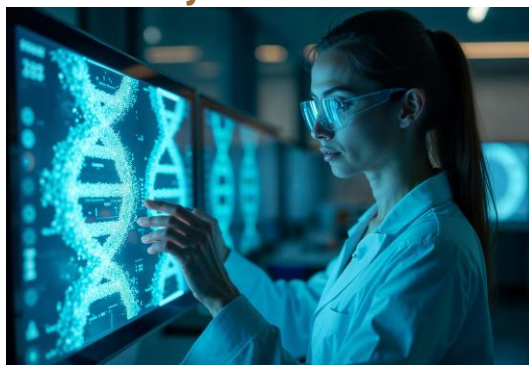


Quote by Nilaya Varma, Group CEO & Co-Founder, Primus Partners

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Genomic testing sees sharp uptake in India, now growing beyond metros



Authored by Anjali Singh

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Article Content:

Demand for genomic testing in India has surged significantly over the past 2–3 years, fuelled by growing clinical awareness, rapid technological advancements, and the rising adoption of personalised medicine.

From being a niche service in Tier-I cities, genomic diagnostics is now expanding into Tier II and III cities. It is thus reshaping the landscape of preventive and precision healthcare.

The Indian genomic diagnostics market was valued at \$550 million in 2024. It is projected to grow at a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 18 per cent, reaching \$2,066.31 million by 2030, according to industry estimates.

Key drivers include wider physician adoption, declining test prices, improved accessibility, and a shift in consumer behaviour towards proactive and personalised healthcare.

Diagnostics majors such as Agilus Diagnostics, Metropolis Healthcare, Dr Lal PathLabs, Mahajan Imaging & Labs, and Redcliffe Labs reported double-digit growth in the segment.

While metros like Mumbai, Bengaluru, and Delhi still contribute the lion's share, growing awareness and infrastructure in cities like Lucknow, Bhubaneswar, Pune, Kochi, and Surat are driving demand beyond urban hubs.

Test affordability has improved substantially. Prices for routine genomic tests — like BRCA1/2 (done to analyse a person's DNA to identify mutations in genes that increase the risk of breast, ovarian cancers) and non-invasive prenatal testing (NIPT), a blood test performed on pregnant women to assess the risk of certain genetic conditions in the fetus — have come down by 30–40 per cent. They now range between ₹5,000 and ₹20,000, depending on the complexity.

While advanced oncology panels and exome sequencing can still cost up to ₹2 lakh, widespread adoption of high-throughput platforms and in-house test development have made even complex testing more accessible.

Experts believe that though there has been an increase in demand for genomic testing across multiple segments, the country-wide focus on cancer detection and reproductive health has been the driving factor in this growth.

"The rapid increase in demand for cancer tests along with pediatric and reproductive health applications like prenatal and carrier testing are major contributing factors driving the growth in genetic testing. The country is also witnessing a growth in demand for testing in rare genetic diseases which is driven by the huge genetic diversity of India," said Nilaya Varma, group chief executive officer (CEO) and co-founder, Primus Partners.

"Genomic testing now contributes 5–7 per cent of our total diagnostics revenue, up from under 2 per cent three years ago," said Anand K, managing director (MD) & CEO of Agilus Diagnostics.

Redcliffe Labs pegs this number even higher at 30–40 per cent, with a consistent 20 per cent year-on-year (Y-o-Y) growth in test volumes.

"We've seen a dramatic rise in genomic testing demand over the past five years, especially in oncology, rare diseases, and reproductive health. What's encouraging is that Tier II and III cities like Lucknow, Bhubaneswar, and Coimbatore are now actively adopting these tests," said Himani Pandey, Lab Head – Genomics, Redcliffe Labs.

Metropolis Healthcare, which entered the genomics space three years ago, has seen more than 50 per cent revenue growth in the segment. It plans further expansion through investments in bioinformatics and next-generation sequencing (NGS) platforms.

"We've seen over 50 per cent revenue growth in genomics since our entry into the space three years ago. Genomic testing is increasingly being integrated into routine health check-ups, cancer diagnostics, rare disease screening, and personalised treatment planning. We are investing heavily in bioinformatics and NGS platforms to scale further," said Kirti Chadha, chief scientific and innovation officer, Metropolis Healthcare.

Similarly, Dr Lal PathLabs, through its genomics division 'Genevolve', has launched over 500 tests covering oncogenomics, neurogenomics, rare disease panels, and reproductive health.

"We're bringing cutting-edge testing to both metros and smaller towns," said Shankha Banerjee, CEO of Dr Lal PathLabs.

While margins on genomic tests can vary, and in many cases are still lower than those for routine diagnostics due to high input costs and low volumes, players see genomics as a long-term strategic bet. “It’s not just about margins—it’s about clinical value, and helping doctors make better treatment decisions,” said Shelly Mahajan, lab director at Mahajan Imaging.

A common thread across players is the push for in-house development and Indian population-specific panels, often coupled with global partnerships for specialised tests.

Most labs are also investing in artificial intelligence (AI)-driven bioinformatics, advanced molecular labs, and automation to enhance scalability.

Yet, challenges remain. Despite cost reductions, insurance coverage for genomic tests in India remains extremely limited, creating affordability barriers for patients in lower-income segments. Industry leaders stress that broader insurance inclusion could accelerate adoption, particularly for cancer, rare diseases and reproductive health-related tests.

Nonetheless, the momentum is clear: Genomic testing is no longer a fringe offering. With its ability to provide deep molecular insights for early diagnosis, targeted therapy and risk prediction, it is fast becoming a core pillar in India’s diagnostics growth strategy