

DATE:	2021 June 14
TO:	All Zones, Medical Genetics Clinics and Laboratories, Metabolic Clinic, Physicians / Nurses/ Managers / Laboratory Directors
FROM:	Genetics and Genomics
RE:	Discontinuation of Testing: Acid Sphingomyelinase Activity

PLEASE POST OR DISTRIBUTE AS WIDELY AS APPROPRIATE

Key Message

- The Alberta Children's Hospital (ACH) Biochemical Genetics Laboratory (BGL) in Calgary has discontinued in-house testing of acid sphingomyelinase enzyme activity.
- Effective immediately, testing for the province will be referred to the Centre Hospitalier Universitaire (CHU) Sainte-Justine in Montreal.
- Referring this testing out of province has resulted in changes to:
 - 1) **Specimen type required** from T-cells to leukocytes.
 - 2) **Specimen handling:** A leukocyte preparation will need to be performed by the most appropriate Genetics and Genomics BGL on the specimen prior to send out. Therefore, upon collection, samples must arrive at the appropriate BGL no later than **12 noon** on the **same day** of collection.

How this will impact you

- All collection sites need to be aware that the **specimen type** and **sample handling** requirements for this test have changed, in order to:
 - Prevent test cancellation due to inappropriate specimen handling
 - Avoid unnecessary repeat collections, potentially leading to patient harm
 - Ensure that viable specimens can be referred out for testing

Action Required

- All collection sites should review the Alberta Precision Laboratories Test Directory for acid sphingomyelinase, leukocyte.

[Alberta Precision Laboratories | Lab Services \(albertahealthservices.ca\)](http://albertahealthservices.ca)

Questions/Concerns

- Newborn Metabolic Screening and Biochemical Genetics Laboratory in Edmonton: 1-780-407-8820
- Alberta Children's Hospital Biochemical Genetics Laboratory in Calgary: 1-403-955-7380

Approved by

- Dr. Dennis Bulman, Medical/Scientific Director, Genetics & Genomics, Alberta Precision Laboratories
- Dr. Carolyn O'Hara, Chief Medical Laboratory Officer (Interim), Alberta Precision Laboratories