

<b>DATE:</b>	2021 May 3
<b>TO:</b>	Oncologists, Province Wide
<b>FROM:</b>	Edmonton Zone Immunohistochemistry Laboratory, Alberta Precision Laboratories (APL)
<b>RE:</b>	PD-L1 Head and Neck Squamous Cell Carcinoma Testing Available in Alberta

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### Key Message

- PD-L1 biomarker immunohistochemistry (IHC) testing on recurrent or metastatic head and neck squamous cell carcinoma (HNSCC) is available in Alberta on May 3, 2021. PD-L1 IHC has been available on advanced non-small cell lung carcinoma (NSCLC) within Alberta since December 12, 2016.
- The pharmaceutical company Merck has provided compassionate funding for PD-L1 HNSCC testing for up to 24 months.
- Samples must be formalin fixed. A 12-72hr fixation time is most ideal for testing.
- Decalcified tissue is not recommended for use, as false negative staining could be seen.
- Testing cannot be performed on cytology specimens.
- Request for testing by Oncologists only.

### Background

- PD-L1 IHC 22C3 pharmDx is indicated as an aid in identifying a subset of metastatic or recurrent HNSCC patients for treatment with pembrolizumab as per the KEYNOTE-048 study.

### Action Required

- Edmonton: Requests for testing are to be forwarded to Edmonton Zone IHC Lab. Fax: 780-429-2819
- Calgary: Requests for testing are to be forwarded to the Consult Desk 'Attention: Dr. Martin Hyrcza' Fax: 403-944-4748

### Effective

- **May 3, 2021**

### Questions/Concerns

- *Calgary:* Dr. Martin Hyrcza [Martin.Hyrcza@albertaprecisionlabs.ca](mailto:Martin.Hyrcza@albertaprecisionlabs.ca) 403-944-4759
- *Edmonton:* Dr. Gilbert Bigras [Gilbert.Bigras@albertaprecisionlabs.ca](mailto:Gilbert.Bigras@albertaprecisionlabs.ca) 780-432-8445

### This bulletin has been reviewed and approved by

- Dr. Carolyn O'Hara, Chief Medical Laboratory Officer, Alberta Precision Laboratories