Alberta Health Services

Laboratory Bulletin

Date: **November 12, 2015**
To: **Edmonton Zone: All Physicians, Nursing Staff and Laboratory**
From: **AHS Laboratory Services**
Re: **Collection of Erythrocyte Sedimentation Rate (ESR) samples into Excyte ESR vacuum tubes**

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Key Messages:

- **Effective Nov. 18, 2015**, all Edmonton Zone Laboratories will require Erythrocyte Sedimentation Rate (ESR) specimens to be collected in the black Excyte ESR vacuum tubes (REF-EX-10205)
- ESR testing will no longer be performed on samples collected in EDTA or Sediplast tubes.
- Collection into the Excyte ESR tube is more challenging and may be more uncomfortable for patients. For this and many other reasons, CRP testing instead of ESR is strongly recommended for the vast majority of clinical situations (see Lab Report, April 2013).

Why this is important:

- All remaining Edmonton Zone laboratories are completing the switch to the Excyte ESR method already in use at Dyna***LIFE***$_{DX}$ and the University of Alberta Hospital. This will standardize the ESR methodology across the Edmonton Zone.

Action Required:

- Specimen Collection and Transportation Requirements:
  - Collect ESR specimens using standard venipuncture technique.
  - Excyte ESR Tube must be filled to at least the **minimum draw line** and not more than the **maximum draw line**.
  - Specimen must be received in the laboratory within 4 hours of collection.
  - The vacuum in the Excyte ESR tube is not as strong as other collection tubes and may take longer to fill. Patients may experience more discomfort with blood draws into the Excyte ESR tube.
- Ordering Information:
  - Excyte ESR vacuum tubes may be ordered through Central Inventory (CATALOG#001467257 TUBE, EXCYTE ESR VACUUM EX-10204 INTER MEDICO)

Inquiries and feedback may be directed to:

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This bulletin has been reviewed and approved by:

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