

DATE:	16 September 2024
TO:	Central Zone
FROM:	Red Deer Regional Hospital – Microbiology Department
RE:	Discontinuation of Transport Media for Tissue Culture Specimens

PLEASE POST OR DISTRIBUTE AS WIDELY AS APPROPRIATE

Key Message

- Sterile containers with media/gel will no longer be supplied by the laboratory for tissue/fluid collections.
- Tissue specimens for bacterial culture should be submitted to the laboratory in sterile containers with a small amount of sterile saline.

Background

- Tissue and fluid specimens are preferred when intraoperative specimens are collected for bacterial culture. Swabs should not be used, unless tissue or fluid cannot be collected.
- Small tissue specimens may dry out during transport, reducing organism recovery.
- Previously, the Red Deer Regional Hospital laboratory supplied containers with tissue culture transport media to keep such specimens moistened. This transport media is not in use in other parts of the province and has not been demonstrated to improve organism recovery.

Action Required

- For small tissue specimens, place the tissue in a sterile, plastic container (eg. orange-top urine container) and moisten with sterile/preservative-free saline. Small tissues (~5mm) may be submitted in pre-reduced anaerobic transport media (PRAS, or others) if anaerobic organisms are suspected and media available at your site.
- For large tissue specimens, place the tissue in a sterile, plastic container appropriate for the specimen size, ensuring that the lid can be securely closed. Moisten the surface of the tissue with sterile and preservative-free saline.
- If collecting multiple specimens, ensure each specimen is submitted in a separate container.
- Transport specimens to the testing laboratory as soon as possible.

Effective September 1, 2024

Questions/Concerns

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Approved by

- Dr. Kate O'Connor, MD, APL Medical Director South Sector (Interim)

Effective September 1, 2023, APL has become the sole provider of all public lab services in Alberta. As a result, community lab services formally provided by DynaLIFE Medical Labs will become the responsibility of Alberta Precision Labs (APL). This change impacts all zones.