

DATE:	18 March 2025
TO:	All Healthcare Providers
FROM:	Alberta Precision Laboratories (APL) – Public Health Laboratory
RE:	New CMV, EBV, Adenovirus, Parvovirus B19, and HHV-6 Nucleic Acid Tests

PLEASE POST OR DISTRIBUTE AS WIDELY AS APPROPRIATE

Key Message

- On March 25, 2025, the AltoStar PCR kits (Altona Diagnostics) for CMV, EBV, adenovirus, parvovirus B19, and HHV-6 will be implemented by APL – Public Health Laboratory (ProvLab).

Background

- These viruses are monitored in transplant patients and tested for in certain other patient populations.
- The new assays are Health Canada approved except for EBV viral load and extensive evaluations performed by ProvLab show that they have comparable performance to the currently used tests.
- The AltoStar instrument provides improved automation and testing capacity.
- Each test will continue to be reported in the same units (IU/mL or copies/mL) as the current test except HHV-6, which will be reported in IU/mL which has shown a strong correlation to copies/mL.
- Whole blood (EBV) or plasma (the other viruses) will continue to be used for viral load monitoring.
- There are small differences in limits of detection and reportable ranges of the new and old tests, but these are minimal and will not have a significant impact.

Action Required

- No changes in test ordering or collections will be required.
- Continue to submit a dedicated EDTA blood tube for viral load monitoring (ensure that one full EDTA tube is collected per virus being tested; low volumes risk requiring a recollection if test failures occur).
- Only blood specimens will be reported with a viral load routinely while other specimen types will be reported qualitatively (i.e., detected or not detected). If a viral load is needed for patient management for a non-blood specimen, contact the ProvLab Microbiologist on-call at 780-407-8822 (Edmonton) or 403-944-1110 (Calgary).
- If a sample has a viral load above the new assays' upper limit of quantitation and an exact viral load is required for patient care, contact the ProvLab Microbiologist on-call.

Inquiries and feedback may be directed to

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Approved by

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