

DATE:	14 April 2025
TO:	All Zones: All Physicians, Nurses, Laboratory Services Staff
FROM:	Alberta Precision Labs - Cytopathology
RE:	Revised Urine Cytopathology Test Requirements for Community Urine Specimens

PLEASE POST OR DISTRIBUTE AS WIDELY AS APPROPRIATE

Key Message

- Urine cytopathology (cytology) is no longer recommended in the initial work up of patients at risk for bladder cancer.
- Alberta's new *Provincial Hematuria Evaluation Primary Care Pathway* outlines more appropriate testing in the initial work up of both gross and microscopic hematuria.
- Urine cytology is not required for urology referral for either hematuria or bladder mass (See *Provincial Adult Urology Referral Pathway*).
- Urine cytology continues to play a role in a few specific situations, such as some cases of bladder cancer surveillance or follow-up of patients who have had a negative hematuria work up. Urologists are most familiar with these specific situations and may advise primary care providers to follow up some patients with urine cytology.
- As of **May 12th, 2025**, all community urine cytology requests, including requests for patients with hematuria, will be **cancelled** unless they are ordered by a urologist or on the recommendation of a urologist. "*Urine cytology recommended by urologist*" should be written in the Clinical History when requesting urine cytology.

Why this is important

- Following these recommendations will reduce the number of low yield urine cytology samples and will also improve efficiency and consistency of patient care across Alberta.

Action Required

- Do **not** order urine cytology for initial hematuria or bladder mass work up. Do **not** order urine cytology for urology referral.
- Order urine cytology on community urine specimens **only** on the advice of a urologist.
 - Please follow the new *Provincial Hematuria Evaluation Primary Care Pathway* and the *Provincial Adult Urology Referral Pathway*, which can be accessed on the Alberta Health Services website:
 - [Provincial Hematuria Evaluation Primary Care Pathway](https://www.albertahealthservices.ca/assets/info/aph/if-aph-prov-hematuria-evaluation-primary-care-pathway.pdf)
<https://www.albertahealthservices.ca/assets/info/aph/if-aph-prov-hematuria-evaluation-primary-care-pathway.pdf>
 - [Provincial Urology, Adult Referral Pathway](https://www.albertahealthservices.ca/assets/info/hp/arp/if-hp-arp-asi-urology-gr.pdf)
<https://www.albertahealthservices.ca/assets/info/hp/arp/if-hp-arp-asi-urology-gr.pdf>



- Sites with ConnectCare access must order urine cytology through the ConnectCare ordering module.
- Sites that do not have access to ConnectCare must order urine cytology using a Non-Gynecological Cytopathology requisition, selecting one of the following clinical indications: [Non-Gynecological Cytopathology Requisition](#)
 - ☐ Bladder cancer surveillance, as directed by patient's Urologist *or*
 - ☐ Urine cytology, as directed by patient's Urologist.

Effective May 12, 2025

Questions/Concerns

- Dr. Lwin Aye, Cytology Director, Edmonton Base Lab at lwin.aye@albertaprecisionlabs.ca
- Dr. Marcia Abbott, Medical Lead Cytopathology, Hub Lab, South Sector at marcia.abbott@albertaprecisionlabs.ca
- Dr. June Hwang, Provincial Cytopathology Co-Lead, North Sector at june.hwang@albertaprecisionlabs.ca
- Dr. Steve Gorombey, Provincial Cytopathology Co-Lead, South Sector at steve.gorombey@albertaprecisionlabs.ca

Approved by

- Dr. Michael Mengel, North Sector Medical Director, APL
- Dr. Kate O'Connor, South Sector Medical Director, APL