

DATE:	7 July 2025
TO:	All Zones: All Healthcare Professionals and Providers
FROM:	Clinical Biochemistry, Alberta Precision Laboratories (APL)
RE:	Standardization of Specimen Collection Container for Folate

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Key Message

- Effective **July 8, 2025**, APL will no longer accept MINT LIHEP PST as a specimen collection container for folate. GOLD SST tube is the default specimen collection container for folate testing.

Background

- Currently, MINT LIHEP PST is the default specimen collection container for folate tested at the University of Alberta Hospital whereas GOLD SST is the default specimen collection container for folate tested at the APL Hub laboratories (Edmonton Base Lab, Calgary Diagnostic and Scientific Centre).
- Recent internal studies indicate a large positive bias (>25%) using MINT LIHEP PST when compared to GOLD SST specimen collection containers.
- To maintain test result consistency, all APL sites performing folate will now provincially standardize to GOLD SST as the default specimen collection container for folate. MINT LIHEP PST will no longer be accepted.
- Reminder on Choosing Wisely Canada appropriate utilization for serum folate:
 - “Don’t order serum folate testing in the absence of the following: anemia with red blood cell macrocytes or hypersegmented polynuclear neutrophils and a reasonable clinical suspicion of a nutritional deficiency such as an unsupplemented restrictive diet, severe Alcohol Use Disorder, or malabsorption.” [Medical Biochemistry Recommendations](#)

How this will impact you

- Add-on folate orders will only be processed if a previously collected GOLD SST specimen is available.
- No change in reference intervals.

Action Required

- Follow the specimen collection container information for folate in Connect Care.
- Refer to APL [Test Directory](#) if appropriate.

Inquiries and feedback may be directed to

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- Edmonton Base Lab Clinical Chemist Team, 825-394-1816 | apl.clinicalchemists@aplabs.ca
- Sally Ezra, Clinical Biochemist, Diagnostic and Scientific Centre, 403-770-3759 | sally.ezra@aplabs.ca

This bulletin has been reviewed and approved by

- Carolyn O’Hara, Chief Laboratory Medical Officer, APL