

DATE:	21 July 2025
TO:	All Healthcare Providers
FROM:	Alberta Precision Laboratories (APL) – Provincial Public Health Laboratory (ProvLab)
RE:	Testing Collected in Expired Universal or Viral Transport Media Will be Cancelled

PLEASE POST OR DISTRIBUTE AS WIDELY AS APPROPRIATE

Key Message

- Effective August 1st, 2025, all samples submitted in expired universal transport medium (UTM) or viral transport medium (VTM) will not be processed.
- Tests requested with the samples collected in expired medium **will be CANCELLED**.

Background

- UTM/VTM is used when collecting swabs for nucleic acid testing (NAT/PCR). This includes testing for respiratory viruses (such as SARS-CoV-2, influenza, and RSV), HSV-1/2, VZV, Mpox, syphilis, mumps, measles, and enterovirus).
- The performance of this testing using expired medium has not been evaluated and therefore test quality cannot be guaranteed.

Action Required

- Starting August 1st, 2025, ProvLab will cancel testing submitted with expired medium.
- Check the expiry date before using UTM/VTM for sample collection. The expiry date can be found on the manufacturer's label affixed to the tube.
- If expired medium is used in error and recollection is impossible, please consult the Public Health Laboratory Microbiologist/Virologist-on-Call (Calgary 403-944-1110, Edmonton 780-407-8822) as soon as possible to discuss testing options.

Inquiries and feedback may be directed to

- Dr. Nathan Zelyas, Medical Microbiologist, Public Health Laboratory, APL (nathan.zelyas@aplabs.ca)
- Dr Mathew Diggle, Clinical Microbiologist, Provincial Laboratory for Public Health, APL (mathew.diggle@aplabs.ca)

Approved by

- Dr. Mathew Diggle, Acting Medical/Scientific Director, Public Health Laboratory, APL