

DATE:	14 October 2025
TO:	All Zones
FROM:	Microbiology, Alberta Precision Labs
RE:	Discontinuation of Stool WBC Testing

PLEASE POST OR DISTRIBUTE AS WIDELY AS APPROPRIATE

Key Message

- **Effective immediately**, microscopy of stool for white blood cells (synonyms: stool WBC, fecal leukocytes) will be discontinued provincially.

Background

- Historically, the presence of white blood cells in stool was used as an indirect marker of invasive bacterial infections such as *Shigella*, *Salmonella* or *Campylobacter*. These organisms are now readily diagnosed province-wide using molecular methods, which has rendered the stool WBC test obsolete for this purpose.
- The presence of stool white blood cells was also previously used as a marker for inflammatory non-infectious diarrhea. However, fecal calprotectin is now available as an alternative and superior test for investigation of such conditions, and is the recommended test in the AHS [Chronic Diarrhea Pathway](#).

How this will impact you

- Test requests for stool white blood cells (or stool WBC, fecal leukocytes) will be cancelled.

Inquiries and feedback may be directed to

- Dr. Thomas Griener, Medical Microbiology, thomas.griener@albertaprecisionlabs.ca
- Dr. Wilson Chan, Medical Microbiology Calgary Site Lead, wilson.chan@albertaprecisionlabs.ca

This bulletin has been reviewed and approved by

- Dr. Carolyn O'Hara, Interim Chief Medical Laboratory Officer, APL