

DATE:	6 February 2023
TO:	South Zone Health Care Providers
FROM:	APL Microbiology
RE:	Change of Collection Container for Stool Culture and Ova & Parasites

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Key Message

- **Effective immediately**, the use of transport media for bacterial stool culture is being discontinued.
- Samples for stool culture should be submitted in a sterile orange-top container.
- Stool samples for parasite testing should be submitted in a container with SAF preservative **and** a sterile container without preservative.

Background

- Studies have shown that sensitivity of bacterial stool testing is not affected by transport media when the stool is processed for culture within a day.
- On Feb. 27, for South Zone community and rural hospital sites, stool culture will be transitioned to a more sensitive molecular method, which cannot be performed on specimens received in transport media. More information related to this method change will be released in February.
- On Feb. 27, testing for protozoal parasites will also be transitioning to a molecular method that cannot be performed on specimens in SAF preservative. Stool in SAF preservative will still be necessary for ova & parasite microscopy when this test is clinically indicated. More information to follow in February.
- These changes will align South Zone with other zones in Alberta.

How this will impact you

- There are no changes to test ordering, and there will be no changes to result reporting before Feb. 27.

Action Required

- Stool specimens collected for stool culture **should be collected in sterile orange-top containers** without transport media (see Table 1).
 - Without transport media, stool should be transported to the laboratory as quickly as possible after collection.
 - **Effective Feb. 27**, specimens collected in enteric/fecal transport media on South Zone community and rural hospital patients will not be able to be processed, and **test requests will not be processed**.
- Stool specimens collected for parasite detection, including Giardia/Cryptosporidium screen and full ova & parasite microscopic examination, **should be collected in a sterile container with SAF preservative AND a sterile orange-top container without preservative**.
 - **Effective Feb. 27**, specimens submitted in only SAF preservative on South Zone community and rural hospital patients will not be able to be processed, and **test requests will be not be processed**.



Table 1 - Previous and New Stool Collection Devices

DISCONTINUED Stool Collection Devices	NEW Stool Collection Device
Dalynn or ThermoFisher Enteric Pathogen Transport 	Sterile Orange Top Container (without transport media) 

Inquiries and feedback may be directed to

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This bulletin has been reviewed and approved by

- Dr. Dylan Pillai, South Sector Medical Director, Alberta Precision Laboratories