



**Date:** November 30, 2020  
**To:** Medicine Hat and Area Physicians, Care Providers, and Ambulatory Clinics  
**From:** Alberta Precision Laboratory Outpatient Laboratories  
**Re:** Medicine Hat Outpatient Lab Locations and Service Restrictions during COVID-19

**PLEASE POST OR DISTRIBUTE AS WIDELY AS APPROPRIATE**

**Key Messages:**

- Ambulatory Clinic patients, immunocompromised patients, and patients requiring special collections can obtain service at the Medicine Hat Regional Hospital (MHRH) outpatient lab by booking an appointment.
- The Outpatient Laboratory at MHRH will not accept walk-in community patients. Ambulatory Clinic patients who are attending hospital appointments are eligible for same-day service at the outpatient laboratory.
- All community patients should be directed for service at the AHS Patient Collection Site on Carry Drive.

Acute Care Site	Service	Type	Hours
Medicine Hat Regional Hospital (MHRH)	Immunocompromised Patients	Appointment Required, by physician referral	<b>0700-0800 Mon-Fri</b> <i>Closed Statutory holiday</i>
	Special Collections	Appointment Required	0800-1600 Mon-Fri <i>Closed Statutory holidays</i>
	Ambulatory Clinic Patients	Appointments Preferred	0800-1600 Mon-Fri <i>Closed Statutory holidays</i>
<b>Community Outpatients</b>			
Carry Drive Collection Site	<b>All community outpatients</b>	Appointments preferred Walk-in patients accepted	0700-1900 Mon-Friday 0815-1600 Sat <i>Closed Statutory holidays</i>



**Why this is important:**

MHRH Outpatient Lab is available to collect patients that attend on-site Ambulatory Clinic appointments, immunocompromised patients, and patients requiring special collections.

Carry Drive is available to collect patients that have/will attend appointments with their family physician or other provider not in a hospital setting, and patients that will attend a hospital clinic appointment and require bloodwork to be available for the clinician during that appointment.

Patients attending either the hospital outpatient lab or patient collection site may experience longer wait times as a result of Ministry directives to follow enhanced safety protocols related to COVID-19.

**Actions Required:**

- Healthcare providers should continue to follow established site processes for patient referrals to the hospital Outpatient Lab. Please see [Accessing Laboratory Services: Medicine Hat Locations](#) patient handout (attached).
- Booking appointments can be performed by the online option at [www.ahs.ca/labsouth](http://www.ahs.ca/labsouth) or by calling 403-502-8269 / 1-866-232-4732 to make an appointment.

**Inquiries and feedback may be directed to:**

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**Definitions:**

Ambulatory Clinic patient	Patients that receive medical service at a hospital on an outpatient basis.
Immunocompromised patient	Patients that are taking immunosuppressive drugs/treatment, experiencing illness/injury or have an inherited disease affecting the immune system.
Special collections	Samples that require special handling, not available at Carry Drive, include: Blood gases, cryoglobulins, lactate and vitamin c. Please refer to the Test Directory for more information.
<u><a href="#">Healthcare provider</a></u>	Can include doctors, nurses (RNs, LPNs), dentists, psychologists, physiotherapists, pharmacists, and dieticians, etc.

**This bulletin has been reviewed and approved by:**

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## Accessing Laboratory Services: Medicine Hat Locations

**PLEASE READ PRIOR TO YOUR LAB VISIT:** Alberta Precision Laboratories (APL) is working hard to deploy our laboratory resources in the safest and most efficient way possible as we continue to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic. Many healthcare services have been impacted as a result of the pandemic, and the lab is no exception. **Some changes to our operations are necessary in order to follow Public Health guidelines and keep our patients and staff safe. We want you to be aware that APL has implemented several new measures and, as a result, your visit to the lab for bloodwork or other services will be different that it was prior to the pandemic.** New measures include instituting appropriate physical distancing, the use of personal protective equipment (PPE), and the *requirement of appointments in some locations to better manage the flow of patients into the lab.* This is all done to keep our patients and our staff safe. It also allows us to enhance safety for those most vulnerable by ensuring immunocompromised patients can be served separate from the general population. This document will help guide you through these changes to ensure your laboratory visit is safe and efficient. We thank you for your patience and your cooperation.

### Before your laboratory visit please see the following information:

#### Appointment Service Only

Visit [www.ahs.ca/labsouth](http://www.ahs.ca/labsouth) or call **1-866-232-4732** to book an appointment.

Medicine Hat Regional Hospital Outpatient Lab	Monday to Friday, 0700-0800: Closed to the public, appointments are available by physician referral only. Monday to Friday, 0800-1600: Appointments preferred for same-day Ambulatory clinic patients, and <b>required</b> for all other patients. Saturday/Sunday/Statutory holidays: Closed.
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#### Appointment and Walk In Service

Carry Drive Patient Collection Site	Monday to Friday, 0700-1900: Appointments preferred & walk in service available. Saturday, 0815-1600: Appointments preferred & walk in service available. Sunday/Statutory holidays: Closed.
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### During your laboratory visit:

**IMPORTANT:** To allow for social distancing in waiting areas, arrive no more than 3-5 minutes prior to your appointment time.

- Do not bring additional family members/friends unless necessary
- Follow instructions of laboratory staff and signage within the laboratory
- You will be asked general health screening questions related to COVID-19 symptoms. Your answers determine the level of personal protective equipment required.
- You will be asked to perform hand hygiene with provided hand sanitizer
- You will be asked to wear a mask, which will be provided to you
- If you are currently wearing a non-medical/homemade mask, we will ask you to replace this mask with one which we will provide you
- You will be asked to maintain social distance at all times from other patients and staff, an exception will be made by a staff member during your procedure
- Laboratory waiting rooms have identified maximum number of occupants allowed
- You may be asked to queue outside the laboratory area
- During peak hours you may be asked to return at an alternate time

For more information on novel coronavirus COVID-19 visit

<https://www.albertahealthservices.ca/topics/Page16944.aspx>

For COVID-19 info for Albertans visit <https://www.alberta.ca/coronavirus-info-for-albertans.aspx>