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**Date:** June 12, 2020  
**To:** All Healthcare Sites and Providers  
**From:** Alberta Precision Laboratories (APL) – Public Health Laboratory  
**Re:** URGENT Leaking COVID-19/Respiratory Virus Transport Media Tubes,  
Recall of Four Types of Tubes

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

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**Key message:**

- Specific tubes containing saline have been reported to leak at unacceptable rates resulting in test cancellations.
- These tubes have been distributed to multiple sites across the province over the last few weeks. The issue is not limited to specific lot numbers but rather certain types of tubes.
- APL is issuing a recall of all tubes meeting the descriptions below.
- If you receive tubes that are leaking, notify APL – Public Health Laboratory (ProvLab) as per instructions below.
- If leaking tubes are received, the test may be canceled and recollection will be necessary.

**Background:**

- Due to shortages in swab collection supplies, multiple tube types have been implemented. It has been discovered that some tube types may potentially leak.
- Leaking tubes risk contaminating the patient's specimen and may result in insufficient volume remaining to test. They also pose a potential health risk to laboratory staff, which has so far been avoided by the appropriate use of personal protective equipment.
- Grossly leaking samples require repeat collections.

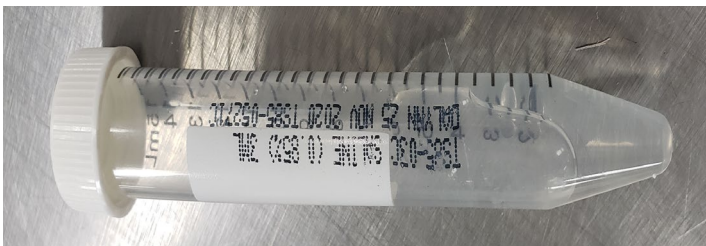
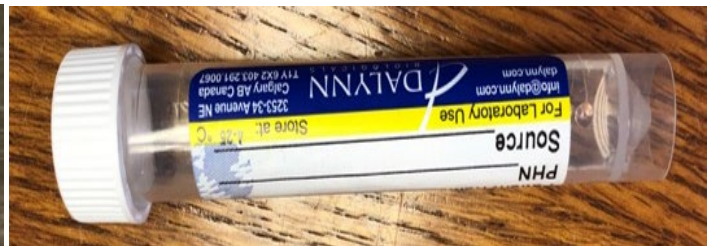
**Action Required:**

- Ensure staff at your site are aware of [instructions on collection of swabs](#) and to appropriately tighten caps of media tubes provided before sending to the laboratory.
- **DISCONTINUE the use of the four types of tubes shown on page 2.**
- If your site has these tubes, IMMEDIATELY order new collection kits from ProvLab using this form:  
<https://www.albertahealthservices.ca/assets/wf/plab/wf-provlab-specimen-collection-kit-order-form.pdf>
- Send both the swabs and the tubes back to ProvLab (Edmonton site for North, Edmonton, and Central Zones; Calgary site for Calgary and South Zones) once the new shipment has been received.
- If you do not have other collection tubes available and you must test patients before the new shipment arrives (1-2 days), do so with the current tubes, but ensure the caps are tightly fastened.



- If you receive tubes that are leaking, notify ProvLab (contact information below), send by e-mail a photo of the tube with the label, number of tubes affected, and any additional pertinent information.
- Review the AHS/APL instructions on collecting, transporting and breaking or cutting swabs with no breakpoint:
  - Instruction Sheet: <https://www.albertahealthservices.ca/assets/info/ppih/if-ppih-covid-19-saline-transport-medium-collection.pdf>
  - Instructional Video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zqMrBDQchOs&feature=youtu.be>

**DISCONTINUE the use of these four types of tubes**



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

Contact for Central, Edmonton and North Health Zones:

Maria Falsetti, Clinical Supervisor, APL – Public Health Laboratory, [maria.falsetti@aplabs.ca](mailto:maria.falsetti@aplabs.ca)

Contact for Calgary and South Health Zones:

Kimberly Tang, Manager, APL – Public Health Laboratory, [kimberly.tang@aplabs.ca](mailto:kimberly.tang@aplabs.ca)

**Approved By:**

Dr. Graham Tipples, Medical-Scientific Director, Public Health, APL