

Date: October 13th, 2015
To: North Zone and Central Zone: Physicians, Nursing and Laboratory Staff
From: AHS Laboratory Services
Re: Abbott i-STAT Beta-hCG Testing

PLEASE POST OR DISTRIBUTE AS WIDELY AS APPROPRIATE

Key Messages:

November 2nd, 2015 on-site testing for quantitative blood hCG levels will be available in selected smaller hospitals (see below) with a significant obstetrical patient population for the investigation and management of ectopic pregnancy.

The test requires Lithium Heparin whole blood or Lithium Heparin plasma collected in plastic syringes or evacuated tubes filled to capacity. The reference interval for the test is <5 IU/L. All results greater than 2000 IU/L will be reported as >2000 IU/L.

Results from the i-STAT are not numerically equivalent to other analyzers. Do not compare results from method to method. Testing by the same method is required for serial monitoring.

In the setting of an indiscriminate transvaginal ultrasound finding, the index of suspicion for ectopic pregnancy increases with an hCG concentration greater than ~1000 IU/L.

Use of this test for the following purposes has **NOT** been validated:

- o Testing in larger hospitals with on-site access to quantitative hCG testing
- o Routine pregnancy screening
- o Monitoring of high-risk pregnancies
- o Monitoring of hCG-positive tumors and malignancies

Actions Required:

1. If you are investigating an ectopic pregnancy, hCG must be ordered STAT or Urgent and write “ectopic pregnancy” on the requisition. Samples not meeting these requirements will be referred off-site.
2. To place Meditech orders for ectopic pregnancy the new order code is **HCG** and must be ordered STAT or Urgent.

Implementation Sites:

North Zone

Barrhead	High Prairie	Slave Lake	Whitecourt
Cold Lake	Hinton	St. Paul	
Edson	Lac La Biche	Wabasca	
Fairview	Peace River (back up only)	Westlock	

Central Zone

Vegreville	Vermillion	Innisfail	Rimbey
Provost	Wainwright (back up only)	Lacombe	Stettler
Two Hills	Drayton Valley	Olds	Sundre
Viking	Drumheller	Ponoka	Wetaskawin
Rocky Mountain House			

Inquiries and feedback may be directed to:

- Dr. Anna Fuezery, Regional Clinical Chemist, Alberta Health Services
 - o Phone: 780-735-5658, email: anna.fuezery@albertahealthservices.ca

This bulletin has been reviewed and approved by:

Dr. James Wesenberg, AHS Provincial Medical/Scientific Director