

**Date:** February 11, 2019  
**To:** All Clinical Staff – Edmonton Zone  
**From:** AHS Laboratory Services – Edmonton Zone  
**Re:** Collection of non-CSF Fluids in EDTA/Red Top Vacutainers

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### Key Messages:

- It is requested that all non-CSF body fluids be collected preferentially into 4 mL lavender EDTA vacutainer tubes (Ref # 367861) for cell counts, and 4 mL red serum vacutainer tubes (Ref # 367812) for routine chemistry tests.
- CSF cell counts and chemistry tests should continue to be preferentially collected into Sterile Screw Cap Vial(s).
- The laboratory will continue to process any fluid cell count requests collected into EDTA or Sterile Screw Cap Vial(s), or chemistry tests collected into Sterile Screw Cap Vial(s), even if they are not the preferred sample type.

### Why this is Important:

- Traditionally the laboratory has requested that all fluid (both CSF and body fluids) cell counts be collected into Sterile Screw Cap Vial(s). EDTA had been listed as an acceptable alternative for cell counts.
- The use of 4 mL EDTA tubes instead of Sterile Screw Cap Vial(s) has been found to offer the following advantages in non-CSF body fluids:
  - Fewer clots which can give incorrect results.
  - Cost savings for clinical areas that stock the supplies for non-CSF body fluids
  - Less specimen manipulation during testing which results in faster turn-around and improved staff safety.

### Action Required:

- Continue to collect CSF Cell Counts (Test Code: SFCT) into Sterile Screw Cap Vial(s) as before.
- Switch to collecting all non-CSF body fluids for cell counts into 4 mL EDTA tubes where possible.
- Switch to collecting all non-CSF body fluids for chemistry testing into 4 mL red top tubes where possible.
- Refer to the Laboratory Test Directory for instructions if uncertain which tube/vial to use at:  
<https://www.albertahealthservices.ca/webapps/labservices/index.asp>

### Inquiries and feedback may be directed to:

Edmonton Client Response - 780-407-7484

Dr. Artur Szkotak, Zone Clinical Section Chief and Divisional Director for Hematopathology - 780-407-7104

Dr. Albert Tsui, Clinical Biochemist - 780-407-4369

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

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