



Date: Aug 29, 2020
To: All Physicians and Healthcare Providers
From: Alberta Precision Laboratories
Re: Discontinue using APTIMA Collection Kits/Swabs for COVID-19 Testing Immediately

PLEASE POST OR DISTRIBUTE AS WIDELY AS APPROPRIATE

Key Message:

DO NOT USE APTIMA[®] Multitest or Unisex Swabs for COVID-19 testing.

Use nasopharyngeal or throat swabs recommended and distributed by APL/AHS specifically for COVID-19 testing,

APTIMA[®] swab specimen collection kits are the only collection kits available for *Chlamydia trachomatis* (CT) and *Neisseria gonorrhoeae* (GC) nucleic acid testing in Alberta. These swabs are in **short supply** due to global demand.

Why this is important:

Due to supply chain problems associated with the COVID-19 pandemic, supplies of APTIMA[®] swabs are being restricted globally. APL is working with the manufacturer of APTIMA[®] swabs to ensure an adequate supply is maintained to continue STI testing at current levels.

Early in the COVID-19 pandemic, APL recommended APTIMA[®] swabs for COVID-19 testing because availability of other types of collection kits was limited. Other collection kits containing nasopharyngeal or throat swabs are now available for COVID-19. **To ensure adequate supply of APTIMA[®] swabs for STI testing, APTIMA collection kits should not be used for COVID-19 testing.**

Action Required:

1. **For COVID-19 testing, use swabs OTHER than the APTIMA[®] swabs.**
2. **Closely monitor distribution of APTIMA[®] swabs and order only what is required for a one month supply.**
3. For further information on COVID-19 swabs refer to the AHS Laboratory Bulletin "COVID-19 Collection Kit Guidance"
<https://www.albertahealthservices.ca/assets/wf/lab/wf-lab-bulletin-covid-19-collection-kit-guidance.pdf>

Inquiries and feedback may be directed to:

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This bulletin has been reviewed and approved by:

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