

Date: 15 July 2019
To: Infectious Diseases, Oncology, Haematology, Fetal Medicine
From: Alberta Public Laboratories (APL) - ProvLab
Re: Implementation of Parvovirus B19 PCR at the Provincial Laboratory

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Key Message:

- Effective July 8, 2019 ProvLab will now perform PCR for Parvovirus B19, instead of sending the samples to the National Microbiology Laboratory in Winnipeg, which is discontinuing this service.
- Samples will be tested within three business days of receipt; STAT testing is NOT available.

Introduction & Clinical Indications:

- Parvovirus B19 is a common viral pathogen causing infections typically diagnosed by serology in immunocompetent patients.
- However there are a number of clinical scenarios where molecular testing can provide a definitive diagnosis, such as in patients with significant immunodeficiencies or hemoglobinopathies, suspected *in-utero* infections (hydrops fetalis) and chronic infections.

Specimen Collection/Transport Requirements:

- Whole blood (EDTA/lavender top Vacutainer) is the sample of choice although bone marrow in an EDTA vacutainer or other fluids, such as amniotic fluid collected in a sterile container, can also be tested.
- Samples should be sent to the ProvLab with minimal delay, or stored at 4 °C in a fridge if a delay is unavoidable.
- Contact the Microbiologist/Virologist-on-Call if submitting tissue or biopsy samples.

Why this is important:

- Testing at ProvLab will result in a significantly shorter turnaround time to a result. When appropriate, quantitation of the viral load in IU/mL will be reported in conjunction with a positive result.

Action Required:

- None

Inquiries and feedback may be directed to:

- Dr. Kevin Fonseca, Program Lead & Clinical Virologist, Provincial Laboratory at Phone: (403) 944 1263 or e-mail: Kevin.Fonseca@albertapubliclabs.ca

This bulletin has been reviewed and approved by:

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