
Date: May 20, 2016

To: All Physicians, All Zones, Infectious Disease Physicians, Gastroenterology Physicians, and WH&S Physicians

From: Provincial Laboratory for Public Health (ProvLab)

Re: Hepatitis C Virus Testing for Blood and Body Fluid Exposure Incidents

PLEASE POST OR DISTRIBUTE AS WIDELY AS APPROPRIATE

This is an updated bulletin and replaces the previous bulletin issued on May 15, 2014.

Key Messages:

- Follow-up testing for blood and body fluid exposure (BBFE) incidents involving unknown or Hepatitis C positive sources includes an HCV RNA test for the recipient performed at 6 weeks post-exposure, according to Alberta guidelines and WHS protocols.
 - Link to guidelines: <http://www.health.alberta.ca/documents/PEP-Guidelines-2015.pdf>
- The required sample type is a serum as per usual HCV RNA testing.
 - Link to Guide to Services: <http://www.provlab.ab.ca/guide-to-services.pdf>
- The usual indication for HCV RNA testing is for therapeutic response monitoring purposes, which is not the case for BBFE.

Why this is important:

- It is important that the appropriate indication for testing be included on the laboratory requisition form otherwise the virologist-on-call may end up cancelling the request.
- Cancellation of the test will cause a delay in reporting this result back to the relevant team and delay any appropriate intervention that may be required.

Action required:

- Write clearly: **“BBFE follow-up HCV RNA test – please do not cancel”** on the laboratory requisition form.
- Other wording may lead to test cancellation.

Inquiries and feedback may be directed to:

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This bulletin has been reviewed and approved by:

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