

Date: March 5, 2015

To: Alberta Health, Laboratory Directors and Managers, Medical Officers of Health,
All hospital physicians, Infection Prevention and Control, FNIHB

From: Provincial Laboratory for Public Health (ProvLab)

Re: Update on enterovirus (including Enterovirus EV- D68) testing strategy for
severe cases of respiratory illness

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Key Messages:

- In the Summer/Fall of 2014, enterovirus D68 (EV-D68) circulation was identified in Alberta patients^{1,2} and a lab bulletin was previously issued describing respiratory EV-D68 testing³.
- Starting immediately, characterization of respiratory enteroviruses including EV-D68, will still be available **following discussion with a ProvLab Microbiologist/Virologist-on-Call (MOC/VOC)** for the clinical management of **suspect unusual or severe cases of respiratory illness** (e.g. asthma exacerbation, bronchiolitis, pneumonitis, pneumonia, ICU admission) or for management of unusual clusters/outbreaks.
- **For suspect acute flaccid paralysis (AFP) cases you must contact your local Medical Officer of Health (MOH) prior to specimen collection for direction on specimen collection, and coordination of testing.**
- **On approved respiratory specimens, the Respiratory Virus Panel will identify to the level of entero-rhinoviruses.** Further characterization will occur depending on your discussion with the ProvLab MOC/VOC.

Action required:

- For ProvLab laboratory testing requests for enterovirus typing on severe cases of respiratory illness, the following processes should be undertaken:
 - Contact a ProvLab MOC/VOC to identify severe or unusual cases.
 - Use a manual Provlab requisition to order respiratory virus testing, complete all fields and indicate in writing "Do enterovirus typing testing."
 - Collect and submit a properly labeled specimen with this requisition as you would for routine respiratory virus testing.
- **For guidance on suspect AFP patients please contact your local MOH prior to specimen collection.**

Inquiries and feedback may be directed to:

- Edmonton Site – Phone: 780-407-7121 (ask for the Virologist-on-Call)
- Calgary Site – Phone: 403-944-1200 (ask for the Virologist-on-Call)

Associated documents:

¹ <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/25588657>

² <http://www.albertahealthservices.ca/10418.asp>

³ http://www.provlab.ab.ca/LabBulletin2014/wf_lab_bulletin_provlab_update_enterovirus_interim_testing_strategy.pdf

This bulletin has been reviewed and approved by:

Dr. Graham Tipples, Medical/Scientific Director, Provincial Laboratory for Public Health