
Date: September 22, 2011

To: STI clinics, Sexual and Reproductive Health Clinics, Alberta Health and Wellness, Medical Officers of Health, Alberta MicroNet, Laboratory Directors and Managers

From: Provincial Laboratory for Public Health (ProvLab)

Re: *Neisseria gonorrhoea* and *Chlamydia trachomatis* Nucleic Acid Testing Change

PLEASE POST OR DISTRIBUTE AS WIDELY AS APPROPRIATE

Key Message:

Effective October 2, 2011, as part of the ongoing evaluation, ProvLab will use the Gen-Probe Aptima GC/Ct Combo® assay on urine, urethral and cervical specimens. Testing for both targets will be performed and reported on all specimens submitted for *Neisseria gonorrhoea* GC and/or *Chlamydia trachomatis* (Ct) nucleic acid testing (NAT). This change is relevant only to clients currently submitting samples to ProvLab.

Note: Specimens received in Roche Cobas Amplicor collection kits will NOT be processed if received on or after October 2, 2011.

Why this is Important:

- ProvLab currently offers NAT for detection of GC and Ct using the Roche Cobas Amplicor testing platform for urine, urethral and cervical specimens.
- To address the evolving need for enhanced sensitivity and specificity for these genital and other specimen types, ProvLab is in the process of evaluating several platforms for testing in collaboration with laboratory and clinical stakeholders.

Collection and Transport of Specimens:

- First catch urine without having voided for at least 1 hour: 20 - 30 mL (beginning of stream in a sterile container).
 - Transfer 2 mL urine to a GEN-PROBE APTIMA® Urine Specimen Collection Kit within 24 hours of collection.
 - Store and ship to ProvLab at room temperature.
- Swab specimens: Endocervical and urethral collected in a GEN-PROBE APTIMA® Unisex Swab Specimen Collection Kit.
 - Store and ship at room temperature.
- Swabs from extra-genital sites: ProvLab continues to offer GC and Ct culture for specimens collected from eyes, rectum, and throat. For GC culture submit swabs in charcoal transport media, and for Ct culture, submit swabs in universal transport media. None of the current commercial testing platforms have Health Canada or FDA approval for extra-genital specimen testing. If GC/Ct NAT on extra-genital specimens is required, in addition to or instead of culture, please contact the Microbiologist-on-Call.

Inquiries and feedback may be direct to:

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

This bulletin has been reviewed and approved by Dr. Marie Louie, Acting Medical Director of ProvLab