

Date: February 6, 2012

To: Central Zone – Former David Thompson Health Region:
Physicians, Laboratories, Red Deer Teen / Adult Sexual Health Clinic

From: AHS Laboratory Services – Central Zone

Re: Standardized Reporting for Interpretation of Vaginal Specimens

PLEASE POST OR DISTRIBUTE AS WIDELY AS APPROPRIATE

Key Messages:

The testing and interpretation of vaginal specimens for the diagnosis of Bacterial Vaginosis (BV) has been standardized across laboratories in Alberta. The reporting comments used to communicate laboratory findings to primary care physicians have also been revised to include more informative interpretations.

Why this is important:

Effective February 13, 2012, the Red Deer Microbiology lab will implement these changes into the routine service. The standardized reporting comments are provided below:

• Smear negative for Bacterial Vaginosis.
• Gram stain shows altered vaginal flora. Results are indeterminate for Bacterial Vaginosis.
• Presence of Clue cells suggest transition of vaginal flora towards Bacterial Vaginosis. Repeat testing of another vaginal smear is recommended.
• Smear consistent with Bacterial Vaginosis.
• Results may not be reliable in post-menopausal women. Correlate with the clinical picture.
• Candida species are normal flora in 30-40% of women. The presence of yeast must be correlated with the clinical picture.
• Purulence suggests the presence of another infection and/or inflammatory condition. Correlate with the clinical picture. Testing for N. gonorrhoeae, C.trachomatis and T. vaginalis may be indicated.
• Insufficient sample to assess for vaginitis. Immediate recollection required.

Action Required:

No processes for specimen collection, handling, and shipping have changed.

Inquiries and feedback may be directed to:

[Microbiologist-on-call](#) or Red Deer Regional Hospital Microbiology Laboratory at 403-343-4731

This bulletin has been reviewed and approved by:

Dr. James C. Wesenberg, Medical/Scientific Director, Laboratory Services – Regional Centres and Rural