
Date: September 22, 2014

To: Alberta Health, Laboratory Directors and Managers, Medical Officers of Health, All Physicians, Infection Prevention and Control, First Nations and Inuit Health Branch (FNIHB, Health Canada)

From: Provincial Laboratory for Public Health (ProvLab)

Re: Enterovirus (EV- D68) interim testing strategy

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Key Messages:

- Enterovirus/rhinovirus activity commonly peaks in the late summer/early fall in Alberta¹. Recently, Enterovirus D68 (EV-D68) has been identified in Alberta patients from a variety of regions and patient settings².
- Currently ProvLab is working with our surveillance partners on a surveillance strategy to better understand the impact of EV-D68 in Alberta.
- At ProvLab, the Respiratory Virus Panel (RVP) can detect EV-D68 but only identifies it as an entero-rhinovirus. Further testing is required to specifically identify enterovirus, and still further virus characterization by an investigational sequencing protocol for typing to EV-D68.
- Ongoing routine influenza and respiratory virus testing will continue as normal, but ProvLab will also be testing in parallel for enterovirus / EV-D68 upon request.
- This will be for a one month interim process effective immediately until October 17, 2014.
- Further communication on this testing process will come in October once the current investigation of EV-D68 has concluded.

Action required:

- For ProvLab laboratory testing requests for EV-D68, the following processes should be undertaken:
 - Use a manual Provlab requisition to order your respiratory virus testing, complete all fields and indicate in writing "Do enterovirus D68 testing"
 - Collect and submit a properly labeled specimen with this requisition as you would for routine respiratory virus testing.

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.albertahealthservices.ca/10418.asp>

² <http://www.promedmail.org/direct.php?id=20140916.2775534>

This bulletin has been reviewed and approved by:

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