

## SERVICES AVAILABLE

### DIAGNOSTIC TESTING

The Provincial Laboratory for Public Health (ProvLab) hereafter called the Laboratory, provides the following laboratory testing services\*:

- Bacteriology
- Mycology
- Mycoplasma
- Parasitology
- Environmental Microbiology (Water, Ice and Biological Indicators [BI])
- Food Microbiology
- Serology
- Molecular Diagnostics
- Virus Isolation
- Mycobacteriology

\* Some services provided by the Edmonton Site Laboratory may not be available to customers outside the Edmonton Health Zone. Please refer to the laboratory service provider defined by zone contracts for testing.

Turnaround times have been established for all tests performed in the Laboratory, and are one of the quality indicators used internally to measure our performance. The turnaround time data is captured and monitored on a regular basis.

### INVESTIGATION OF OUTBREAKS: HOW TO ESTABLISH AN EXPOSURE INVESTIGATION (EI)

The Laboratory provides support for investigation of outbreaks of suspected bacterial, viral, parasitological or fungal origin. All investigations must be coordinated through local Public Health or Environmental Health services. When an outbreak is suspected:

1. Contact the local Medical Officer of Health, Health Zone Offices or Environmental Health Officer for the zone or other appropriate health official.
2. The local Medical Officer of Health, Health Zone Offices or Environmental Health Officer for the zone or other appropriate health official will contact the Laboratory at Calgary or Edmonton and ask for the Microbiologist/Virologist On Call (MOC/VOC). Please refer to [Laboratory Contact Information](#).
3. The local Medical Officer of Health, Health Zone Offices or Environmental Health Officer for the zone or other appropriate health official will provide, in consultation with the MOC/VOC, the following details:
  - a. External contact person (External Investigator) for the outbreak (name, telephone, fax)
  - b. Zone where the outbreak has occurred
  - c. Type of outbreak (respiratory, gastrointestinal, sexually transmitted disease or rash related)
  - d. Type of facility involved (long term care facility, school, restaurant, etc.) and location
  - e. Number of persons ill and at risk

**CON'T...**

- f. Date of onset of infection and predominant clinical symptoms
- g. Number and type of samples to be submitted

*There may be more information required as each outbreak is unique unto itself. Additional information required will be determined in consultation with the MOC/VOC.*

4. The MOC/VOC will provide the External Investigator with a laboratory derived tracking number (“EI number”), which will be used to clearly label all specimens and requisitions that are submitted for laboratory investigation.
5. The MOC/VOC will be responsible for all follow-up contact with the External Investigator and will ensure that the appropriate laboratory and public health are notified. This data will be incorporated into the web-based EI system.
6. The External Investigator will arrange to have the appropriate specimens (based on the type of outbreak) collected from symptomatic persons and submitted to the Laboratory as discussed with the MOC/VOC.
7. The External Investigator will retrieve data directly from the EI System.
8. The External Investigator will close the EI under the assigned EI number when the investigation is completed.
9. As requested by MOH’s IPC has been given access to the EI system and permission to contact MOC/VOC to open EI’s in some health zones.

## IDENTIFICATION OF ISOLATES REFERRED FROM OTHER LABORATORIES

The Laboratory provides various specialized reference functions to assist in the identification and/or typing of clinically relevant microorganisms isolated in other medical microbiology laboratories.

- Please use appropriate requisitions for Streptococcus or Mycology reference isolates. These requisitions are available from the Laboratory or the ProvLab website.
- Submit isolates in PURE CULTURE as lyophilized or frozen cultures, or on slants of appropriate media, or in charcoal transport media.
- For anaerobic identification, swab a PURE 48 hour culture of the organism and submerge in anaerobic transport medium or chopped meat broth.
- **DO NOT** use petri dishes to transport specimens; the agar may become dislodged and contamination frequently occurs.

**CON’T...**

Serotyping/serogrouping for the following bacteria is available:

*Escherichia coli* O157:H7  
*Haemophilus influenzae*  
*Legionella pneumophila*\*

*Shigella*  
*Streptococcus agalactiae* (Group B)  
*Streptococcus pneumoniae*

*Listeria monocytogenes*\*  
*Neisseria meningitidis*\*  
*Salmonella*

*Streptococcus pyogenes* (Group A)  
*Vibrio cholerae*  
*Yersinia enterocolitica*\*\*

\*Referred to the [National Microbiology Laboratory](#), Winnipeg, Manitoba.

\*\* Referred to the Public Health, Ontario (Laboratories).