

Practitioner Update

20 August 2010

H1N1 Swine Flu Testing

Lab+ have advised that they have temporarily suspended community testing for influenza.

Select link to view [LabPlus letter](#)

Labtests are therefore not collecting samples for Swine flu testing. Enquiries can be directed to Lab+.

Changes to urine processing at Labtests – From Monday 30th August 2010

Examination of urinary sediment in the community laboratory

1. Urine microscopy findings reported as per UF1000i (see background information)
2. Cast examinations not performed on basis of flag by UF1000i
3. Where requester would like examination of urinary sediment the **fresh (<2 hours old)** urine must be dropped off between 0700h and 1700h at the central laboratory at 37 – 41 Carbine road, Mt Wellington and **sediment examination clearly labeled on form with clinical indication**. Examination will be performed by manual microscopy.
4. These changes have been reviewed by the Renal Medicine Clinical Directors of the three Auckland DHBs.

Background

Most urine samples received at the community laboratory have been submitted for evaluation of urinary tract infection. Other common requests are for protein analysis. Specific requests for examination of urinary sediment are infrequent.

At Labtests we perform automated microscopy (UF1000i). Urines identified as possibly having abnormal sediment are flagged for manual review. In addition, when urinary sediment or examination for dysmorphic RBC is specifically requested urines are centrifuged and manual microscopy is performed.

From 18th June 2010 to 21 July 2010 (33 days) we received 17095 urines. Of these, 2023 (12%) flagged for review of urinary casts. Manual microscopic examination revealed *potentially* clinical significant casts (granular casts) in 4 (0.2%) urines. However, this is not an optimal urinary sediment examination as the urine was no longer fresh and not centrifuged (see below). No dysmorphic RBC were seen.

What is the value of examining for the urinary sediment?

Urinary sediment examination is part of the work up of renal impairment and is interpreted in conjunction with urinary protein, WBC and RBC counts as well as serum creatinine. Elements of interest include casts derived from WBC, RBC, epithelial cells and fatty elements. Crystals can also have diagnostic value.

When should urine be examined for urinary sediment?

Investigation of the following conditions (this list is not exhaustive) -

- Acute renal failure
- Vasculitis
- Glomerular disease
- Persistent haematuria
- Analgesic nephropathy

If you would like to discuss this or any other microbiology issue please contact:

Dr Arlo Upton on (09) 574 7228 or **Dr Dragana Drinkovic** on (09) 574 7229.

Glucose measurement

Always use a grey top, fluoride oxalate tube for all glucose samples.

Due to many unspun serum glucose results becoming critically low, from October 2010, requests for glucose, received in unseparated serum tubes, will not be assayed for glucose.

- Glucose is used by RBCs for energy. Therefore unpreserved glucose in contact with red blood cells results in lower glucose levels.
- A clotted sample for glucose measurement collected in a serum separation tube (SST-Gel) and not separated immediately is unreliable i.e. serum in clotted samples is still in contact with the clot which contains RBCs so the RBC enzymes continue to use glucose, resulting in lower glucose results.
- Grey top tubes contain fluoride which blocks the use of glucose by RBC.

Patient Instructions for fasting glucose blood test:

Patients must not take anything by mouth except water. Brushing teeth is acceptable – chewing gum is not.

Patients may continue to take any prescribed medication.

Pakuranga Collection Centre Relocating

From Monday 6th September 2010 our Pakuranga Collection Centre will be located at 17 William Roberts Rd, behind the National Bank on the corner of William Roberts Rd and Reeves Rd, adjacent to the Westfield Shopping Centre. The fax number will remain the same: 09 572 0115.

Collection services will continue at our current location at 2 William Roberts Rd until Friday 3rd September 2010. The Centre will be closed on Saturday 4th September 2010.

Laboratory Request Forms

To ensure accurate provision of laboratory test results it is essential that the Laboratory Request form is completed in full. This includes:

- **Complete patient details:** Full Name, NHI, DOB, Phone Number and Address.
 - **Clinical Notes** are important for the interpretation of all laboratory results.
 - **Reason for testing, where relevant for non-funded testing**, e.g. immigration/visa application related testing, pre-employment testing, travel-related testing. (note 'symptomatic' for eligible post-travel testing).
 - **If your patient is not eligible for funded testing** please indicate this clearly on the request form. <http://www.labtests.co.nz/Information-for-Clinicians/Tests-We-Offer/Test-Funding-Eligibility.aspx>
 - **If your practice is taking payment** for the patient's testing please indicate "Charge to Practice" or if the patient is to pay at the Collection Centre please indicate "Charge to Patient".
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Swabs

All swabs need to arrive in the Laboratory within 24 hours of collection.

We have provided a guide on our website to assist you to select the correct swab for sample collection:

[http://www.labtests.co.nz/Images-\(1\)/Which-Swab-for-Which-Test.aspx](http://www.labtests.co.nz/Images-(1)/Which-Swab-for-Which-Test.aspx)

Special Tests requiring an appointment

- GTT
- MANTOUX
- SYNACTHEN
- FINE NEEDLE ASPIRATION (FNA)
- SKIN SENSITIVITY TESTING

If your patient requires one of these Special Tests then an appointment must be booked.

Phone: 0508 LABTESTS (0508 522837) Option 4 – Special Test Bookings.

Patient Test Instructions are available via the Supplies Order Form on-line or on our web-site:

<http://www.labtests.co.nz/Information-for-Patients/Tests-We-Offer/Patient-Test-Instructions.aspx>

Consumables Order Form On-line

Consumables can be ordered on-line and the order form is updated from time to time. On-line ordering can be accessed from the home page of our website <http://www.labtests.co.nz/>. Click on “Order your Consumables online” at the bottom right of the page.

http://webforms.healthscope.com.au/scripts/WebOrder.asp?Region=NZ&customer_type=DOC.

You will need your *Practice Account Code* to access this service. If you do not have a code please contact your Medical Liaison Officer or 0508 LABTESTS (0508 522 837).

Cervical Smears – BD SurePath

Labtests can process Cervical Smears collected using the BD SurePath product. We have received positive feedback from practices using this second generation testing system, noting the reduced number of unsatisfactory results due to blood-stained or inflammatory specimens and the convenience of sending the cervical specimen for cytology together with any other specimens such as swabs to Labtests with their routine pickups, so saving time. **Please note Labtests are not able to pick up ThinPrep specimens from your practice.** If you would like more information about BD SurePath and to receive a starter pack please contact your Medical Liaison Officer or 0508 LABTESTS (0508 522 837).

Urine samples

All urine specimens need to arrive in the Laboratory within 24 hours of collection.

FAQs

- Do we have to refrigerate all Urines before Collection? **Only some**, please read on;
- Mid-Stream Urine and Cytology Urines need to be refrigerated because our urine tubes do not contain additives.
- Chlamydia Urine collected in the Chlamydia PCR yellow cap containers can be kept at room temperature or be refrigerated. These containers include an additive to preserve the specimen.
- If you require assistance to implement a process for the refrigeration of urine specimens following collection please contact your Medical Liaison Officer.
- A helpful document from our Microbiology Department can be found on our web-site:
[http://www.labtests.co.nz/Images-\(1\)/Labtests-Microbiology-Update-May-2010.aspx](http://www.labtests.co.nz/Images-(1)/Labtests-Microbiology-Update-May-2010.aspx)

Specimen Collection Guide

Our Specimen Collection Guide is available on the web-site and is updated from time to time - please take note of the issue date at the bottom of the page.

<http://www.labtests.co.nz/Information-for-Clinicians/Test---Service-Request-Forms.aspx>

Test Pricing

The Test Price List is available on our website. This will be updated from time to time - please take note of the date at the bottom of the page.

<http://www.labtests.co.nz/Information-for-Clinicians/Tests-We-Offer/Test-Pricing-For-Clinicians.aspx>

Reference Range Intervals

This information is available on our website.

<http://www.labtests.co.nz/Information-for-Clinicians/Reference-Intervals.aspx>