

## Labstrack - August 2013

# Viral Hepatitis Serologic Testing Changes to Test Ordering, Algorithm and Reporting

To Health Care Providers:

Effective September 30, 2013, the Public Health Ontario Laboratories (PHOL) will update its viral hepatitis serology (i.e. hepatitis A, B and C) ordering and testing process.

### **Background Information:**

A number of different viral agents, such as Hepatitis A, B, and C, can infect the liver and result in hepatitis. Depending on the clinical situation, each agent requires a unique set of serologic tests for appropriate diagnosis and management. As part of PHOL's commitment to continuous quality improvement, the PHOL's viral hepatitis testing algorithm will be revised to assist clinicians in ordering the appropriate viral hepatitis serology tests required for clinical decision making.

There is no change in PHOL viral hepatitis serology testing methodology or availability.

### **Ordering Tests for Viral Hepatitis Serology:**

To order viral hepatitis serology, please use the updated PHOL General Test Requisition form, available as of September 30th on the PHO website at <http://www.publichealthontario.ca/Requisitions>

For viral hepatitis serology, please complete Section 3, including Reason for Test (Immunity, Acute Infection, or Chronic Infection) and the specific hepatitis virus(es) requested. Failure to properly complete the form may result in test delay or cancellation.

# Viral Hepatitis Serologic Testing-Changes to Test Ordering, Algorithm and Reporting (Continued)

**Hepatitis Serology**

**Reason for test** (Check (✓) only one box):

Immune status

Acute infection

Chronic infection

**Indicate specific viruses** (Check (✓) all that apply):

Hepatitis A

Hepatitis B

Hepatitis C *(testing only available for acute or chronic infection; no test for determining immunity to HCV is currently available)*

The image shows a screenshot of the 'Public Health Ontario' 'General Test Requisition' form. A large black circle highlights the 'Hepatitis Serology' section of the form, which corresponds to the content in the adjacent callout box. The form includes sections for Submitter, Patient Information, Doctor Information, Specimen Type and Site, Reason for Test, and Clinical Information.

Specific viral hepatitis serologic tests can still be ordered based on the clinical situation and previous test results issued by PHOL or another laboratory. This information must be included on section 3 of the PHOL general test requisition. The following table indicates the specific serologic tests that will be performed based on the information provided:

Reason for test:	Specific Virus(es) Of Interest		
	Hepatitis A	Hepatitis B	Hepatitis C
<b>Acute</b>	Hep A IgM	HBsAg ,HBCAb Total(IgG +IgM) and HBcIgM <sup>1</sup>	HCV Antibody
<b>Chronic</b>	Not indicated <sup>2</sup>	HBsAg , HBCAb Total(IgG +IgM)	HCV Antibody
<b>Immunity</b>	Hep A IgG	Anti-HBs	Not indicated <sup>3</sup>
<b>Prenatal Screen</b>	Not routinely tested <sup>4</sup>	HBsAg	Not routinely tested <sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> HBcIgM is tested for acute requests only if HBCAb Total (IgG + IgM) is reactive.

<sup>2</sup> Hepatitis A is not associated with chronic infection and thus no testing will be performed in this situation.

<sup>3</sup> There is no current serologic test which indicates immunity to hepatitis C and thus no testing will be performed.

<sup>4</sup> Routine testing for hepatitis A or C during prenatal screening is not currently recommended and will not be performed unless clinically indicated (e.g. outbreak investigation, etc.)

# Viral Hepatitis Serologic Testing-Changes to Test Ordering, Algorithm and Reporting (Continued)

## Results Interpretation:

A final interpretation will be issued on all reports when all tests have been completed.

## Specimen Requirements and Turnaround Time:

There are no changes to the specimen type, collection, transport, volume requirements, or turnaround time with the changes to testing and reporting. For more information, refer to <http://www.publichealthontario.ca/testdirectory>

For information on recent changes to the revised General Test Requisition, refer to LAB-SD-019-001, Updates to PHOL General Test Requisition Effective September 30, 2013 at <http://www.publichealthontario.ca/Lababstracts>

## For Further Information:

- Contact the PHOL Customer Service Centre at 416-235-6556 or 1-877-604-4567 (toll-free), or by email at [CustomerServiceCentre@oahpp.ca](mailto:CustomerServiceCentre@oahpp.ca)
- For PHOL specimen collection information and previous Lababstracts, visit <http://www.publichealthontario.ca/specimencollection>
- Current versions of the PHOL General Test Requisition and other forms are available at <http://www.publichealthontario.ca/Requisitions>
- To subscribe to future Lababstracts, email [lababstracts@oahpp.ca](mailto:lababstracts@oahpp.ca)
- To register for Autofax and receive laboratory reports by fax directly from our laboratory information system as soon as they are released, contact the PHOL Customer Service Centre.