



Creighton
MEDICAL LABORATORIES

RAPID INFLUENZA EIA DISCONTINUED IN FAVOR OF INFLUENZA A/B PCR

Effective September 8, 2009, Creighton Medical Laboratories will no longer offer rapid influenza testing by enzyme immunoassay (EIA). It has become increasingly apparent during the recent novel H1N1 (swine) influenza outbreak, that rapid influenza EIA tests have inadequate sensitivity and positive predictive value. In a recent study published out of New York where a large outbreak of novel H1N1 influenza occurred this past spring and summer, it was found that the sensitivity of two rapid influenza EIA tests were 21% and 18% for seasonal influenza A and H1N1 respectively.* In addition, positive predictive values were low at 84% and 77% for seasonal influenza A and H1N1 respectively. We have experienced similar results locally. Thus, neither positive nor negative results are reliable.

In contrast, the PCR test that CML has been performing since January 2009 has high overall accuracy (>95%) with both excellent sensitivity and positive predictive value for the detection of all types of influenza A and B. Turnaround time is also fast. Specimens received by 10AM will be tested and resulted that same afternoon. Specimens received later will be performed the next day.

Starting on September 8, 2009, any request for influenza rapid EIA will automatically be changed to the influenza A/B PCR unless you specifically request otherwise by stating "DO NOT DO PCR". In this case the test will be sent to our reference laboratory for influenza culture since rapid EIA is not available there either. Keep in mind that influenza culture results will not be available for 2-14 days.

Effective Date: September 7, 2009

Specimen and Transport Requirements: Same as for Rapid Influenza EIA; nasopharyngeal aspirate, wash or swab, or throat gargle or swab, or bronchoalveolar lavage (BAL). Place specimen in viral transport media and store refrigerated or on wet ice.

Test Order: Influenza A/B PCR

Availability: Performed on weekdays and Saturdays with results available afternoon of same day if specimen received before 10AM.

*Ginocchio CC, et al. Evaluation of multiple test methods for the detection of the novel 2009 influenza A (H1N1) during the New York City outbreak. *J Clin Virol* 2009 Jul; 45(3): 191-5.

Please forward this to appropriate staff members within your facility. If you have any questions, please contact CML at (402) 280-4382.

Creighton Medical Laboratories is proud to be your partner in providing effective and timely health care.

September/2009