

HEPATITIS C VIRAL LOAD & GENOTYPING

Creighton Medical Laboratories is pleased to begin offering in house Hepatitis C Virus (HCV) viral loads (quantitative) and genotyping using molecular amplification methodology (PCR). These tests were previously sent out to our reference laboratory. Both tests are recommended for HCV infected patients with active disease who are candidates for antiviral therapy.

The HCV viral load test is designed to measure the quantity of HCV per mL of blood (IU/mL). The analytical sensitivity is approximately 50 IU/mL (1.7 log), which is comparable to the qualitative method offered by our reference laboratory. Results below the limit of detection (1.7 log IU/mL) will be reported as " <1.7 log IU/mL." Results between 1.7 and 2.3 log IU/mL (50 to 200 IU/mL) will be reported as "HCV RNA detected below the limit of accurate quantification." Results 2.3 log IU/mL (200 IU/mL) and greater will be reported with a numeric value. A baseline viral load is recommended before initiation of therapy with follow up loads recommended at 2-12 weeks after initiation, at treatment end, and 6 months later. Therapeutic efficacy is associated with an undetectable viral load at the end of treatment which is sustained for 6 months (Sustained Virologic Response or SVR).

The HCV genotyping test is designed to ascertain the type of HCV is infecting the patient. The specific genotype may influence the length and dosage of antiviral therapy that is given. Genotype 1, which is the most common type in the USA, is the most difficult to treat. Genotypes 2 and 3, although less common in the USA, are more responsive to antiviral therapy. Genotyping can be added to a specimen if ordered **WITHIN 5 DAYS OF QUANTIFICATION RESULTS. Please contact specimen processing at (402) 280-4382.**

Please view the HCV Algorithm document see a testing algorithm which integrates all of the testing modalities for the laboratory diagnosis of HCV infection, including serologic tests such as HCV EIA and RIBA, and molecular tests such as viral loads and genotyping. On the effective date, HCV EIA results will also be reported as a numeric signal to cutoff ratio (s/co) with interpretation, which can be used as an aid to decide if confirmatory testing is needed (see algorithm).

Effective Date: August 14, 2006

Specimen and Transport Requirements: One 6 mL SST, PPT or one 5 mL EDTA

Test Order: HCV Viral Load and HCV Genotyping

Availability: Results available within 5 working days of specimen receipt.

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.



Creighton Medical Laboratories

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