

Heparin Induced Thrombocytopaenia (HIT) screen test

From Monday 23 February 2009 the HIT Screen Assay will only be available between the hours of 0800 – 1700 Monday – Friday. This is due to the world-wide unavailability of the Diamed HIT Screen kit. The new methodology is more complex and time-consuming and requires specific expertise. We regret this reduction in service and are actively pursuing other options.

For further enquiries, please contact the Haematology Laboratory.

Enterovirus serology update

As noted previously, LabPlus has discontinued serological testing for enterovirus infection, effective 1st January 2009.

Enterovirus serology is based on group antigens, and lacks both sensitivity and specificity for identification of specific enterovirus infection. Detection of virus, either by culture or PCR, is the preferred diagnostic test.

Westmead Hospital in Sydney, Australia offer CF testing, however, they will only perform testing if **both** acute **and** convalescent sera are received.

Faecal Alpha-1 Antitrypsin

LabPlus is pleased to announce that the faecal alpha-1 antitrypsin (faecal AAT) test is once again available. The new ELISA based test, priced at \$297.60 +GST per test provides greater reliability and sensitivity. The main indication for using this test is to diagnose and monitor protein losing enteropathy. The turn around time for faecal AAT is normally around 2-3 weeks; however it may be possible to perform an urgent assay after consultation with the on-call chemical pathologist. The specimen is a random stool sample.

Please contact Dr James Davidson, Clinical Head – Chemical Pathology for further details.

Change of methodology for detection of Acetylcholine receptor antibody (AChRAb)

From April 6th 2009, LabPlus will change methodology from RIA to ELISA.

Changes to note are:

- ▶ Normal range change from 0.25nmol/L to 0.45nmol/L
- ▶ Differences in absolute quantitations. By both local and international validation studies, assay sensitivity in the ELISA has been shown to be equivalent to or slightly superior to that of the RIA. However, due to differences in assay configuration, values obtained with the RIA method ***should not*** be compared with those obtained by ELISA. In general, absolute values obtained by the ELISA are higher than those when RIA is used.

Comparison of sequential values when tested by ELISA alone is possible.

The change of methodology will:

- ▶ Improve TAT
- ▶ Increase confidence of reporting low positive sera by running patient sera in duplicate
- ▶ Improve both assay sensitivity and specificity
- ▶ Allow detection of both foetal and adult AChRAb

The following Clinical and Technical staff can be contacted for further information:

Dr. Rohan Ameratunga, Clinical Immunologist xtn 6113

Paul Austin, Section Leader – Serology xtn 23006

Anthony Brown, Technical Specialist – Serology xtn 6108

Maternal serum screening – change to sendaway requirements

We have not had appropriate Saturday delivery service from Post Haste, which we are currently investigating solutions to resolve.

We request that all maternal screening serums collected on Friday and Saturday be centrifuged, separated, and then frozen to -20°C. These can then be sent in the frozen bio freeze bottles on a Monday. Please contact us if you require a Bio – Freeze or further information.

We apologise for any inconvenience this extra step may cause. Unfortunately this method will have to be used until we can be confident that we have obtained a reliable Saturday delivery service. If this affects any other test requests please let us know, so we can work with you to meet your laboratories requirements.

Courier Ticket Orders

We have changed the protocol for ordering tickets due to large amounts of tickets being placed on our Sub60 account, of which we cannot identify the individual customers. This makes it impossible to verify to our accounts payable what the tickets are for.

We apologise for any inconvenience this extra step may cause. If this affects any of your requests please let us know, so we can work with you to provide the best service possible.

For further tickets call 0800 LAB PLUS (0800 522 7587) and our LabLink team will take your order for tickets. Please request tickets before you run out, and if you only have a couple of tickets and need them urgently, please inform the LabLink team member so that your request can be prioritised.