



# Physician Alert



February 28, 2017

## INFORMATION for PHYSICIANS

### AUTOMATED ERYTHROCYTE SEDIMENTATION RATE (ESR) for ST. BONIFACE HOSPITAL

Effective **Monday, March 6, 2017** the DSM St. Boniface Hospital site will be sending ESR tests to DSM Health Sciences Centre, Winnipeg, for testing. ESR will be performed using the TEST1 automated ESR instrument for erythrocyte sedimentation rate. The change will provide improved clinical quality and sustainability for this test.

**Reference range:** unchanged

**Turn around time:** up to 24 hours

**Sample requirements:** EDTA whole blood tube, minimum 2 mL

#### Test specifications:

The new instrument measures ESR using a microagglutination method that assesses the interaction of RBC's with inflammatory plasma proteins, determining the length of sedimentation (capacity of RBC aggregation over time) by optical density.

**Peer-reviewed comparison studies have shown that the microagglutination method correlates better than the Westergren method (manual) with inflammatory protein levels (total protein, globulin, CRP, and  $\alpha_1$ -,  $\alpha_2$ -,  $\beta_2$ -, and  $\gamma$ -globulin). These findings indicate that ESR measurements by TEST 1 reflect inflammation better than do those by the Westergren method in patients with malignancy, autoimmune disease, or infection.** The TEST1 method is not sensitive to hematocrit fluctuations, and to  $\beta_1$  globulins related to malignancy. Therefore, ESR may not be prolonged in some cases of monoclonal gammopathies and neoplasms.

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with any questions or concerns