





Clinical Practice Change: Clinical Microbiology

Date: March 12, 2014

To: All Manitoba Physicians and Healthcare Staff served by DSM Microbiology Laboratories

From: Dr. James Karlowsky, Medical Director, and Shirley Hoban, Technical Director, Clinical Microbiology Discipline, Diagnostic Services Manitoba

Re: *Haemophilus ducreyi* culture (Chancroid culture)

Take Home Messages:

1. Starting March 17, 2014, *Haemophilus ducreyi* culture will no longer be performed by DSM laboratories due to extremely low test volumes and clinical incidence.
2. The test of choice for detection of *H. ducreyi* is nucleic acid amplification testing (NAAT). **This test is available through Cadham Provincial Laboratory (CPL) using a CPL requisition.**
3. Specimens must be collected from genital ulcers using a **cotton or Dacron swab** and submitted either dry (without transport medium) or in Chlamydia Transport Medium (2SP CTM).
4. Under certain circumstances (e.g., treatment failure, outbreak investigation) culture may be required and is available at CPL. To ensure successful culture, prior arrangement with CPL **must** be made before a specimen is collected. Please call CPL at 204-945-7184 or 204-945-7204 for notification and to obtain 2SP CTM transport medium.

Chancroid is extremely rare in Canada (0 to 3 cases per year) but may be encountered in individuals with sexual exposures in endemic countries either as travelers or residents. The disease is endemic in most developing countries, including areas of the Caribbean. The definitive diagnosis of chancroid requires the demonstration of either *Haemophilus ducreyi* DNA or isolation of *H. ducreyi* from a genital ulcer specimen. This can be achieved either through nucleic acid amplification testing (NAAT) or culture. Due to the extremely low volume of testing and relatively low number of cases reported in Canada, testing for this pathogen in Diagnostic Services Manitoba (DSM) microbiology laboratories will be discontinued starting March 17, 2014.

NAAT is more sensitive than culture to identify *H. ducreyi* (1-3) and is the test of choice. Testing by NAAT may be ordered through Cadham Provincial Laboratory (CPL) using a CPL requisition. The National Microbiology Laboratory (NML) in Winnipeg will perform the NAAT. Specimens for NAAT must be obtained from genital ulcers and received on a cotton or Dacron swab inside a sterile container (i.e., a "dry" swab) or in appropriate transport medium (i.e., Chlamydia Transport Medium [2SP CTM]) that can be obtained from CPL. Culture may be required under certain circumstances such as treatment failure or an outbreak investigation. If culture is required, specimens **must** be collected in 2ST CTM and transported to CPL immediately to maximize the potential for growth. Prior arrangements with CPL **must** be made for culture to be performed. CPL can be notified at 204-945-7184 or 204-945-7204. Please consult the CPL Guide to Services for additional information at: <http://www.gov.mb.ca/health/publichealth/cpl/>



Physician Alert



References

1. Ledebouer NA, Doern GV. 2011. *Haemophilus*, p 588-602. In Versalovic J, Carroll KC, Jorgensen JH, Funke G, Landry ML, Warnock DW (ed), Manual of Clinical Microbiology, 10th Ed. ASM Press.
2. Lewis, DA. 2000. Diagnostic tests for chancroid. *Sex. Transm. Infect.* 76:137-141.
3. West, B et al. 1995. Simplified PCR for detection of *Haemophilus ducreyi* and diagnosis of chancroid. *J. Clin. Microbiol.* 33:787-790.

If you have any questions or require further information, please contact Dr. James Karlowsky at 204-237-2105 or Shirley Hoban at 204-237-2073.