

## ***Pathology and Laboratory Medicine Memorandum***

**To:** NSH Healthcare Providers and Health Service Directors

**From:** Dr. Andrea Thoni, Division of Clinical Chemistry

Dr. Todd Hatchette, Division Chief of Medical Microbiology

Mr. Charles Heinstein, Technical Manager Medical Microbiology

**Date:** April 24, 2023

**Subject:** Streamlining and Standardizing Celiac Testing in Nova Scotia

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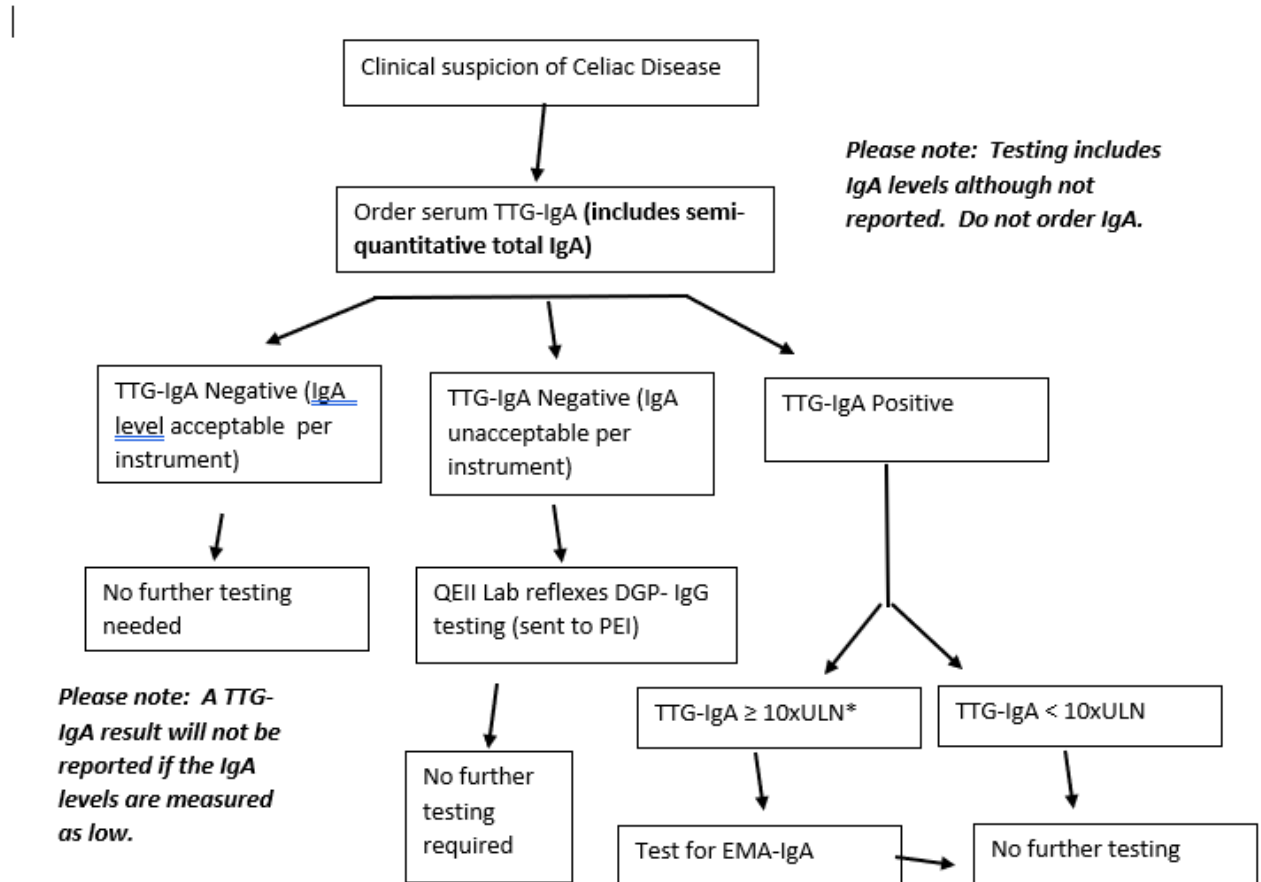
Effective April 24, 2023 all celiac testing from Nova Scotia will be performed in the Central Zone Laboratories following a new standardized testing algorithm.

Celiac disease is a clinicopathological diagnosis and tissue transglutaminase antibody [TTG(IgA)] is the best first line biochemical test to aid in the diagnosis. Endoscopy retrieved biopsy remains the gold standard for diagnosis. However, TTG(IgA) levels  $\geq 10x$  upper limit of normal (ULN) and elevated endomysial Ab (EMA) strongly support a diagnosis of celiac disease and in the proper clinical context negates the need for endoscopy. Following stakeholder feedback and the recognition that testing across the province currently is varied and not in line with national guidelines, a new streamlined and standardized testing algorithm has been developed (see flowchart included). As such, please note:

- TTG(IgA) performed in the Central Zone microbiology laboratory will be the first line test for celiac disease province wide. This test includes semi-quantitative IgA testing to screen for low levels of IgA, so separate IgA levels do not need to be ordered.
- Other existing celiac “panels” will no longer be offered.
- Do not order endomysial Ab (EMA) in patients  $>16$  years of age, as those who have a TTG  $\geq 10x$  ULN the first time, will be automatically tested for EMA.
- Patients who are  $\leq 16$  years of age with TTG  $\geq 10x$  ULN will have their sample frozen for potential further testing and should be reviewed by pediatric Gastroenterology (GI). For this purpose (or if GI require EMA on a new sample) please fax a written request/special form to (902- 473-7971).
- Do not order Deaminated Gliadin Protein [DGP(IgG)]. TTG(IgA) testing with low levels of IgA will continue to be sent for alternate IgG (DGP) testing automatically.

If you have any questions, please contact Dr. Todd Hatchette or Dr. Andrea Thoni at 902-473-6867

Celiac Cascade Testing- NSH and IWK



**Please note: Samples from patients >16 years will be automatically sent for EMA-IgA. Samples from patients ≤16 years will be frozen should Gastroenterology require EMA-IgA.**