



Capital Health

MEMORANDUM

TO: Capital Health Physicians, Clinics, Nova Scotia District Labs and Maritime Provincial Labs

FROM: Dr. Todd Hatchette / Dr Jason LeBlanc
Directors, Virology and Immunology Section

DATE: July 14, 2014

RE: Changes in Lyme Disease Testing

On July 14, 2014, the Microbiology laboratory added the C6 Enzyme Immunoassay (EIA) to its Lyme disease testing algorithm. This is the same assay that the National Microbiology Laboratory (NML) uses in their testing algorithm. The Microbiology lab will continue to use the whole cell lysate EIA as the primary screening assay and positive specimens will be reflexively tested with the C6 EIA. Serum with positive or indeterminate C6 EIA results will be forwarded to the NML for supplemental testing using Western blots as recommended by the Infectious Disease Society of America and the Canadian Public Health Laboratory Network.

This change will reduce the turnaround time for Lyme disease testing. The C6 EIA will also be able to detect the bacterial strains that cause European Lyme. Physicians who have patients with suspected Lyme disease and a history suggesting exposure in Europe should call the laboratory to ensure that the C6 EIA is performed.

Physicians are reminded that serology is not recommended in patients who have been in a Lyme endemic area and who present with erythema migrans, as false negatives can occur in early infection. For more information regarding the testing and treatment of Lyme disease please see the NS Department of Health and Wellness web site:

<http://novascotia.ca/dhw/cdpc/documents/IDEG/Statement-For-Managing-Lyme-Disease.pdf>

If you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact the laboratory at (902) 473-6881.

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