



Capital Health

## MEMORANDUM

**TO:** All Physicians, Nurse Practitioners, CDHA Clinics and Inpatient Units, provincial laboratories, and other referral locations.

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

**DATE:** October 24, 2012

**RE:** Discontinuation of IgM antibody testing for mumps

---

During the mumps outbreak in 2007 we observed that IgM testing missed 75% of acute cases, with the majority of infections being diagnosed by PCR testing. Because of these poor performance characteristics of serology and after discussions with Public Health, we will no longer be offering IgM testing for mumps as of November 30, 2012.

- A request for Mumps IgM testing will be cancelled and the following report sent.

*“The sensitivity of mumps IgM for the diagnosis of acute infection is low and will only be performed at the request of Public Health.”*

To diagnose mumps, the ideal specimens are a buccal swab submitted in viral transport media (using the same swab distributed for herpes simplex virus testing) and urine in a sterile urine container. Both can be tested by PCR for the presence of the mumps virus. When assessing a patient with findings suggestive of mumps we suggest that **both** specimens be submitted. Physicians are reminded that suspect cases of mumps should be reported to their local Public Health Department.

If you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact the laboratory.

Sincerely,

Todd Hatchette MD FRCPC  
Room 407B, 5788 University Avenue  
Halifax, NS B3H 1V8  
Tel: 902-473-6885 Fax: 902-473-7971  
todd.hatchette@cdha.nshealth.ca

Jason LeBlanc PhD  
Room 407B, 5788 University Avenue  
Halifax, NS B3H 1V8  
Tel: 902-473-7698 Fax: 902-473-7971  
jason.leblanc@cdha.nshealth.ca

*Healthy People, Healthy Communities*