

## *Pathology and Laboratory Medicine Memorandum*

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To: Nova Scotia Physicians and Laboratories, PEI, NB, NFLD Laboratories

From: Dr. Manal Elnenaei, Medical Biochemist  
Mr. Randy Veinotte, Esoteric Laboratory Manager

Date: May 13, 2016

Subject: Referral of Urine Porphyrin Precursors ALA and PBG and change of collection requirements for Urine Porphyrin testing

**Please be advised that urine testing for Delta-Aminolevulinic (ALA) and Porphobilinogen (PBG) will now be referred to In-Common Laboratory (ICL) in Ontario.**

**Also, the collection requirements for urine Porphyrin testing have now changed and a 24 hour container prepared with preservative will be used, which is not suitable for ALA and PBG testing.**

**Therefore if both tests are required, this must be indicated on the requisition for appropriate collection procedures.**

### **Note the following:**

- Urine porphyrin screening is usually requested in patients suspected to have cutaneous manifestations of porphyria and/or to differentiate between certain subtypes of acute porphyria. **For this, a 24 hour urine collection is required for testing:**
  - A dark container with appropriate preservative, will be provided for collection;
  - Specimen must be protected from light and kept cool during collection.
  
- ALA and PBG should be requested only if acute porphyria is clinically suspected and the sample is collected during or shortly following an attack to avoid false negative results. **For this, a random urine collection is required for testing:**
  - 20 mL urine is required with no added preservative;
  - Specimen must be protected from light;
  - Specimen must be labelled inside and outside of the light-protecting wrap;
  - Requests for ALA and PBG from physicians other than Dermatology and General Internal Medicine will require approval by clinical staff in our division.

**All labs outside of NSHA Central Zone are kindly requested to refer these tests directly to ICL.**

If you have further questions about this issue, please contact Dr. Elnenaei at 902-473-5194 or Ms Faye Lively at 902-473-6387.