



Technical Alert

Rapid Hospital Group A Strep Test Shortages

TO: Medical Staff and Clients

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SUBJECT: Supply shortage of Rapid Group A Strep molecular test kits

A supply shortage of the Roche Molecular Group A Strep test kits may result in cultures being performed as an alternate test method to Order Code 5824, Strep A by Nucleic Acid Test.

Manufacturers of rapid molecular tests have transitioned much of their resources to the manufacturing of SARS-CoV-2 tests. This has greatly impacted their ability to fill orders for non-COVID rapid test kits like Influenza and Group A Strep. Roche has informed us they cannot provide an adequate supply of Liat kits for Group A streptococcus testing. Our back up system is Cepheid GeneXpert, but it is unclear if they will be able to meet our demand.

We have already transitioned some Influenza testing to Abbott ID Now, and we are assessing the availability of their Group A Strep supplies as a third option.

Although we are working hard to find another alternative rapid molecular test for Group A strep, there is a high probability that the hospital labs at Punchbowl, West, North Hawaii and Molokai will run out of rapid molecular Group A Strep tests soon. If/when this occurs, the specimen swabs will be sent to Central Microbiology for culture. Unfortunately, this will result in longer turn-around-times (TAT) and a drop in sensitivity.

It is still very important to confirm cases of strep throat with laboratory testing because antibiotics are necessary to prevent the risk of acute rheumatic fever. Use of antibiotics to treat pharyngitis caused by organisms other than Group A strep is discouraged because they are of no proven benefit, yet do contribute to antimicrobial resistance (Shulman, et al. IDSA Guideline. CID, 2012:55).

We apologize for this inconvenience, and are working closely with Roche, Cepheid, and Abbott to minimize the impact of these supply shortages. It is unlikely that they will increase their manufacturing capacity or our supply allocations. Therefore, similar to our COVID-19 testing, we have to depend on multiple platforms for other hospital-based rapid infectious disease testing.

Please refer any questions to DLS Client Services at 589-5101.

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