



## Technical Memorandum

**TO:** Physicians, Staff  
**From:** Wesley Kim, MD, Medical Director  
**Date:** March 7, 2012  
**Subject:** CA 19-9

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Beginning March 19, 2012, DLS will be performing CA 19-9 testing on-island, in-house. CA 19-9 is a protein that exists on the surface of certain types of cells. While it does not cause cancer itself, it can be shed by the tumor cells, making it a useful as tumor marker to follow the course of the cancer. CA 19-9 is elevated in approximately 70% of patients with advance pancreatic cancer. It may also be elevated in patients with colorectal, lung, and hepatobiliary cancer, as well as non-cancerous disease states such as bile duct obstruction due to gallstones, pancreatitis, cystic fibrosis, and liver disease. Low amounts of CA 19-9 can be detected in otherwise normal healthy people as well.

As with the majority of tumor markers, CA 19-9 should not be used as a screening test for cancer. It may be used to help differentiate between cancer of the pancreas and other conditions, to monitor a person's response to cancer treatment, to monitor cancer progression, and to watch for recurrence.

It is important to note, CA 19-9 values determined on patient samples by different testing methods cannot be directly compared with one another. Therefore, a comment to CA 19-9 report will be added: "This test was performed on the Roche Modular E170 Electrochemiluminescence Immunoassay. Results obtained with different assay methods cannot be used interchangeably. Regardless of value, CA 19-9 levels should not be interpreted as absolute evidence of the presence or absence of malignant disease."

***Test Information:***

TEST	ORDER CODE	REFERENCE RANGE	UNITS
CA 19-9	2106	0 - 35	U/mL

DLS will monitor the new method very closely and make adjustments to ensure optimal performance. Because of this, it is important that any feedback, questions, or concerns that you may have in regards to laboratory performance, be immediately communicated to our client services, your marketing representative, or a DLS Laboratory Director, so that they may be addressed to ensure the quality and safety of laboratory results.

If you have any questions, please call DLS Client Services at 589-5101 or contact Wesley J. Kim, MD, Medical Director at 589-5131.