



LABORATORY BULLETIN

2005-10-26

To: Regional Laboratory Directors and Managers

Re: West Nile Virus testing in winter

PLEASE POST OR DISTRIBUTE WIDELY AS APPROPRIATE

We would like to inform you about changes to our West Nile Virus (WNV) testing during the off-season. As WNV does not circulate in Canada during the winter, testing will be scaled back November 1st, 2005, and we plan to ramp up again on June 1st, 2006.

During the winter, most serology performed for WNV is convalescent. Effective November 1st, 2005, West Nile virus serology will be performed weekly, rather than daily, and WNV IgM and IgG will be tested.

As WNV PCR on plasma detects acutely viremic individuals, WNV PCR will not be performed routinely, but the sample will be saved. WNV PCR will continue to be performed on CSF if requested.

If you have an acutely ill patient with a travel history, or other potential WNV exposure, please indicate the history on the ProvLab requisition or history form, and/or page the Microbiologist on call via (403) 944-1200 or (780) 407-7121. We will expedite the WNV serology and PCR tests on such cases.

Transplant screening for WNV will be performed for donors with a travel history, under a separate protocol.

We trust that these seasonal amendments will ensure timely but cost-effective West Nile Virus testing for the Alberta population. Please do not hesitate to call immediately if you have any questions or concerns.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Tilley".

Peter Tilley MD FRCPC
Medical Microbiologist
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A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "J.K. Preiksaitis".

Dr. JK Preiksaitis
Medical Director