



## LABORATORY BULLETIN

2006-October-18

Bulletin #2006 - 9

**To: Regional Laboratory Directors and Managers of Alberta, Northwest Territories, Yukon and Nunavut**

**Re: West Nile Virus testing in winter**

### **PLEASE POST OR DISTRIBUTE WIDELY AS APPROPRIATE**

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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 Nov 1<sup>st</sup>, 2006, and we plan to ramp up again on June 1<sup>st</sup>, 2007.

During the winter, most serology performed for WNV is convalescent. Effective November 1<sup>st</sup>, 2006, 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 be performed on CSF only on consult with the Virologist-on-call. Enterovirus PCR will continue routinely on CSF specimens, as will HSV PCR, when specifically 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 Virologist-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 us immediately if you have any questions or concerns.

Sincerely,

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

Peter Tilley MD FRCPC  
Medical Microbiologist  
(403) 944-1203 [p.tilley@provlab.ab.ca](mailto:p.tilley@provlab.ab.ca)

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "J. K. Preiksaitis".

Dr. Jutta Preiksaitis  
Medical Director  
ProvLab