Health Care Provider Bulletin

LifeLabs Service Updates: 10/26/2026

TEMPORARY SUBSTITUTION OF ANA TESTING WITH ENA/dsDNA TESTING

Dear Health Care Provider,

Effective October 26, 2026, Antinuclear Antibody (ANA) testing will be temporarily unavailable from LifeLabs in British Columbia. Extractable Nuclear Antigen (ENA) and double-stranded DNA (dsDNA) testing will be performed directly on any ANA test request to support clinical decision making until ANA testing resumes.

The MSP guidelines recommend ANA testing as a primary screen to be followed up with appropriate testing for specific antibodies (ENA/dsDNA). Due to this unexpected interruption in testing, LifeLabs will answer ANA requests by substituting with the specific antibody tests (ENA/dsDNA).

Extractable Nuclear Antigens (ENA) are a subset of ANAs. ENA testing is typically performed to subclassify patients known to have a positive ANA screening test. ENA testing is a multicomponent panel test used to diagnostically distinguish the different connective tissue diseases (CTDs). ENA testing may help characterize nuclear antibodies associated with specific CTD diagnoses and help to further distinguish CTD diagnoses. **It is not a standalone test and is typically performed by laboratories in B.C. only following a positive ANA – which will not be the case for LifeLabs during this period.** In either case, the health care practitioner will receive a quantitative report of results in the ENA battery. ENA interpretation is challenging. Prior to making a clinical decision based on ENA results, a call to the RACE line (https://www.raceconnect.ca/) or a discussion with a rheumatologist, internist, or laboratory physician is recommended.

For the MSP Guideline Reference, please see the following:
https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/health/practitioner-professional-resources/bc-guidelines/ana-testing

If you have any questions or need assistance in arranging ANA testing, please contact LifeLabs' Customer Support at 604-431-7206 to be directed to the chemist-on-call.

Sincerely,
LifeLabs