

Dr. Q's questions of the month:



1. What is this *my ehealth* service I've been hearing about?

My ehealth provides patients with the same secure electronic access to their lab test results as their doctors currently have through Excelleris.

2. Why did Excelleris develop *my ehealth*?

Increasing numbers of patients are asking for copies of their own results. In fact, LifeLabs alone mails out close to 20,000 a month. We wanted to provide patients with an easy secure electronic alternative. *My ehealth* will be provided to patients free of charge.

3. How can my patients and I be sure that their information will remain confidential?

My ehealth employs the same rigorous security measures Excelleris uses, including a five-step authentication process. During development, *my ehealth* was vetted by the CPSBC, the Office of BC's Information and Privacy Commissioner, the BCMA and a physician focus group.

4. Will *my ehealth* provide test results from all BC labs?

Not initially. Excelleris is launching *my ehealth* in late January 2010 as a pilot at 2 BC Bio patient service and 2 LifeLabs patient service centers in the Lower Mainland. The service will be rolled out to more locations in the future.

5. Will reporting of results to physicians be altered in any way because of *my ehealth*?

No.

6. Will my patients have access to their test results before I do?

Your patients will have access at the same time as you do if you're using Excelleris today. Patient results will be available through both Excelleris and *my ehealth* at the same time, i.e. when they're released by the testing labs.

7. Where can I find more information on the *my ehealth* service and who can I contact if I have more questions?

Visit the *my ehealth* website at www.myehealth.ca. You can contact Lindsay Allan at 604-658-2103 or lallan@excelleris.com.

NEW Trichomonas test

Trichomonas vaginalis (TV) infection is one of the most common sexually transmitted infections in North America, and is associated with an increased risk of HIV acquisition and transmission in women. TV causes vaginitis in women; however, 10-50% of infected women are asymptomatic. Most infected men (up to 90%) are asymptomatic but may develop urethritis. Since symptoms and signs of TV infection are not specific, definitive diagnosis requires lab testing.

The routine method for diagnosis is wet-mount microscopy with a sensitivity of 60% compared to culture in women (may be less in asymptomatic women). Therefore a negative result does not rule out Trichomoniasis. There is not a clinically relevant test for males.

LifeLabs recently implemented the OSOM Trichomonas Rapid Test. It detects TV antigens and has a reported sensitivity of ~80% and specificity of 99%. The test can only be performed from vaginal swabs. For our own validation study, a total of 180 vaginal swabs with known positive or negative results were collected. The vaginal samples had either a request for Trichomonas testing or TV was seen in the gram stain. The OSOM test result was compared to the original culture or gram stain result. The OSOM test results correlated 100% with the culture method. There was no false positive or false negative results. This new test provides rapid turn-around-time (usually same day vs ≥ 48 hours for our current culture method).

Specimen collection

If Trichomonas and Vag Chronic ordered: Please collect 2 vaginal swabs

If Trichomonas and Group B strep (GBS) (pregnancy) ordered: Please collect 2 swabs:
1. Vaginal swab for Trichomonas
2. Vag-rectal swab for GBS

Please use **red-top Copan swab**



- Cotton or wooden shaft swabs will be REJECTED due to possible interference with the OSOM test.
- Test not available for males or urine specimens.

Dr. Luis Martinez, Medical Microbiologist

Testing for Pandemic H1N1 Influenza Virus

The majority of BC patients infected with the pandemic H1N1 influenza virus have had relatively mild illness that does not require lab testing. However, if you order influenza testing, please take note of the following:

Sample Type and Sample Containers

1. SAMPLE TYPE:

- **OPTIMAL:** Nasopharyngeal swabs.
- **Also acceptable:** Nasal swabs.
- **NOT ACCEPTABLE:** Throat swabs.

2. SAMPLE CONTAINERS:

- **IDEAL:** COPAN flocked swabs in viral transport media.
- **Also acceptable:** Starplex® non-flocked swabs and swabs used for herpes culture in viral transport media.
- **DO NOT USE:** Wire shaft pertussis swabs or gel swabs.

Patient name: John Smith
Date of birth: April 4, 1984
PHN: 900 000 0000

- 3. **Label Sample Containers:** With at least **two patient identifiers**, i.e. Patient name, Birth date, PHN.
- 4. **Orders for Sample Containers:** Must order directly from BCCDC. Orders can be placed by using the *Sample Container Order Form* (available on BCCDC website) and faxing it to 604-707-2606.

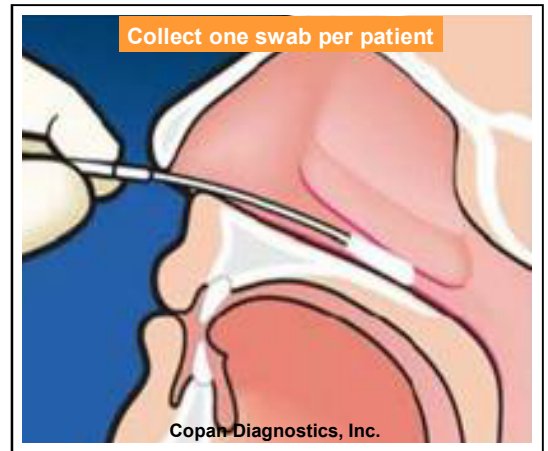
Requisition

Please complete a BCCDC Virology Requisition legibly, indicating:

- **Clinical / Travel history:** E.g. severe respiratory illness, exposure to other patients with influenza, etc.
- **Sample type:** Nasopharyngeal swab / Nasal swab.
- **Test requested:** H1N1 testing or Swine flu testing or code SWFLU09.

Nasopharyngeal Swab Collection Procedure

1. Explain procedure to patient.
2. Wear eye protection (face shield / goggles), gloves, and surgical mask.
3. If the patient has a lot of mucous in the nose, ask patient to use a tissue to gently clean out visible mucous.
4. Seat the patient comfortably. Tilt patient's head back slightly ($\pm 70^\circ$) to straighten passage from the front of nose to the nasopharynx to make insertion of swab easier.
5. Estimate distance to nasopharynx by measuring distance from corner of nose to the front of ear and insert shaft only half this length.
6. Gently insert swab into the nasal passage along medial part of septum and floor of nose, until it reaches the posterior nares. *If resistance is encountered, try other nostril as patient may have a deviated septum.*
7. Rotate swab gently for 5–10 seconds.
8. Withdraw swab.
9. Place swab into viral transport media, snap off shaft at scored line, and close lid tightly.
10. Remove gloves and perform hand hygiene.



Sample Transport

- Samples must be packaged according to **Transport of Dangerous Goods Regulations.**
- Transport sample to laboratory. Please note that LifeLabs couriers can pick up samples for pH1N1 testing on their routine visits to your office and deliver them to BCCDC.

Dr. Colette Pienaar, Medical Microbiologist



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