

Newton-Wellesley Hospital's LAB REPORT

Summer 2011

New Processes Reduce PAP Turn Around Times To One Day

For several years, cytology at Newton-Wellesley Hospital Laboratory has used computer image guided technology as a way to deliver a superior quality Pap smear service. Recently the department has leveraged the quality of image guidance technology and applied Six Sigma principles to improve efficiency. The result of the process change has been a reduction of turn around time from an average of five to seven days, down to a consistent one-day turn around time for 95 percent of our patients. For abnormal Paps requiring a pathologist's review, the turn around time is slightly longer.

Most competitors and commercial laboratories at best offer a three to five day turn around time. Based on our operational changes, we have not only achieved but have maintained a level of turn around consistency only a local hospital outreach program could achieve.

If you would like more information about this service or are interested in using the Newton-Wellesley Hospital Laboratory, please contact Wendy Daigle 617-243-5898 or wdaigle@partners.org.

Tick Identification Testing Now Done at Newton-Wellesley's Laboratory

The Lab now offers tick identification testing with results available within 24 hours. Testing will identify the type of tick and the feeding duration, which can help determine the risk of transmission. Specimens can be submitted in clean containers, with or without alcohol.

Deer ticks (*Ixodes scapularis* along the eastern seaboard) are the vectors for the transmission of Lyme disease, babesiosis and ehrli-

chiosis/anaplasmosis. Dog ticks (*Dermacentor spp*) are the vectors for Rocky Mountain spotted fever, *Tularemia*, Q fever, and ehrlichiosis/anaplasmosis. Lone Star ticks (*Amblyomma americanum*) are the vectors for Rocky Mountain spotted fever, *Tularemia*, and ehrlichiosis/anaplasmosis. In the northeastern United States, about 50 percent of adult deer ticks and five to 30 percent of nymphal deer ticks are infected.

Other tests available include:

- Lyme antibody testing with reflex Western Blot (NWH test code: LYME).
- Tick-borne DNA panel by PCR for Babesiosis and Ehrlichia/Anaplasmosis (PTICK).
- Rapid PCR test for Lyme on whole blood (LYME PCR BLOOD).

For more information on testing, please contact us at 617-243-6300.

Tips to Prevent Transmission of Tick-Borne Diseases

- Avoid time spent in tick-infested habitats.
- Wear light-colored clothing so that ticks can be spotted easily.
- Wear long pants and tuck the pant legs into your socks or boots; wear a long-sleeved shirt and tuck it into your pants. Tape the area where pants and socks meet so ticks cannot crawl under clothing.
- Use insect repellents that contain 20-30 percent DEET. As with all products, follow the manufacturer's usage recommendations.
- Walk in the center of trails to avoid over hanging grass and brush along the trails edge.
- Inspect yourself and pets carefully and remove any attached ticks. It takes a minimum of 24 hours of attachment before an infected tick can transmit the Lyme disease spirochete. Therefore, the quicker you remove ticks, the less likely they can transmit any disease causing organism.



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Blood Bank Test Results Now In the LMR

Blood Bank test results dating back to 1999 are now available in the Longitudinal Medical Records (LMR) system. Results of patient testing (ABO, Rh, antibody screening and IDs, etc.) are available in the EHR viewers in the LAB views. Products associated with a patient at various statuses (available, transfused, etc.) are also displayed. There is an additional display unique to the Blood Bank, which shows a high-level summary of products associated with the patient within the last 90 days.

Why Additional Specimen Information is Requested on Lab Requisitions

When ordering Pap tests, there is additional patient clinical information that is required to be included on the requisition, as these are important factors for the cytotechnologist and pathologist to consider when interpreting the test.

Last Menstrual Period (LMP) is required because understanding if the patient is still cycling and when helps the cytotechnologists determine the appropriate next steps to take in the screening process. If the patient is cycling, the cervical specimen may look different around the menstrual period due to irritation, and that would be expected. If the patient is menopausal and endometrial cells are found, this is abnormal and may be indicative of something more serious, and would result in having the pathologist review the cells further.

Other clinical history that is required due to the impact they have on the interpretation is history of cervical abnormality or irregular bleeding, pregnancy status, if a cervix is present (*total hysterectomy vs. supra-cervical hysterectomy*), whether the patient is taking hormones or birth control pills and if the patient has had radiation or chemotherapy treatment.

When a urine cytology test is ordered, it is important to indicate on the requisition if the specimen was voided. When urine is voided, the cytotechnologist would only expect to see groups of urothelial cells when there is some kind of atypia or possible carcinoma present. The diagnosis would read along the lines of: "Groups of urothelial cells seen; Atypical in a voided urine". If the urine is catheterized urine, however, the cytotechnologist would expect to see groups of urothelial cells due to instrumentation effect due to the use of a catheter.

Improved HIV Antibody Screen Result Notification

We are now flagging reactive results to the ordering clinician by providing a courtesy call the next business day. A positive confirmation will also be called to the ordering clinician.

Contact Us:

Client Services

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Sales and Marketing

617-243-5898



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Compliance Corner

This is a reminder to provide all the necessary updates for the guarantor and billing address information on the requisitions when sending over specimens to Newton-Wellesley Laboratory.

Please verify the patient's demographics to assure correct patient identity and billing information is provided for accurate processing. Wrong information may lead to Lab results and billing statements mistakenly getting sent to the wrong individual, violating patient privacy.

All breaches of patient privacy are reportable to Newton-Wellesley Compliance and Health and Human Services (HHS) on an annual basis. In addition, incidental breaches, as defined by HHS "where an offender didn't realize he or she violated the HIPAA Privacy Rule and would have handled the matter differently if he/she would have known", must also be reported for further review and appropriate corrective actions.

Thank you in advance for working together with us to protect patient privacy.