



October 8, 2013

Dear Provider:

The influenza respiratory virus season is quickly approaching in Western New York. While there is no laboratory-confirmed influenza in the community to date, this notification will serve to inform you about the options available to you from ACM Medical Laboratory for this upcoming respiratory virus season.

To maximize the accuracy and efficiency of respiratory virus testing during the respiratory virus season, ACM Medical Laboratory will be offering a rapid polymerase chain reaction (PCR) test that will detect and differentiate influenza A, influenza B and respiratory syncytial virus (RSV). The specific test used at ACM Medical Laboratory will be the Simplexa **Influenza A/B/RSV PCR Direct** test from Focus Diagnostics that is an FDA-approved method to detect these viruses. Please note that this is a multiplex assay and results for all three viruses will be reported. ACM is pleased to offer a 24 hour turnaround time (TAT) for the **Influenza A/B/RSV PCR**, which is a 3-7 day reduction in TAT compared to traditional culture methods.

Considering the marked increase in sensitivity of PCR testing compared to other diagnostic methods for influenza, ACM will **not** offer rapid influenza antigen testing for the 2013/2014 respiratory virus season. Previously, ACM offered a 24 hour TAT for rapid influenza testing, which will be matched by the new PCR method. Requisitions indicating “influenza” or “rapid antigen” will receive the **Influenza A/B/RSV PCR** assay. ACM **will** continue to offer rapid antigen testing for RSV, however, negative RSV antigen tests will now reflex to the **Influenza A/B/RSV PCR**, rather than culture.

Finally, we would request that physicians who are suspecting other respiratory viruses (including parainfluenza viruses or adenovirus) order ACM’s **comprehensive Respiratory Panel**. This panel will include PCR testing for influenza and RSV, plus a rapid shell vial culture for other respiratory viruses.

Please refer to the table below and the attached Technical Bulletin for additional details. These changes will take effect October 22, 2013. If you have any questions, please contact Dr. Suzanne Dale, Director of Microbiology and Molecular Diagnostics or Ms. Edi Hewa, Manager of Microbiology at 585-429-2204.

Respiratory Virus Tests Offered for 2013/14	New Test Number	CPT Code(s)	Replacing Tests Not Offered in 2013/14 (Previous Test Number)
Influenza A/B/RSV PCR	1554	87631	Influenza culture (9308)
Respiratory Panel (includes Influenza A/B/RSV PCR + rapid shell vial culture)	1590	87631 + 87254 (x4)	Respiratory virus culture (1403)
RSV Rapid Antigen	3250	87420	No change
Influenza A/B/RSV PCR	1554	87631	RSV culture (3884)
Influenza A/B/RSV PCR	1554	87631	Rapid influenza -- No reflex (1806)
Influenza A/B/RSV PCR	1554	87631	Rapid influenza -- With culture reflex (1807)