Des Moines Laboratory Update

Date: April 15, 2021

COVID-19 Sequencing at State Hygienic Laboratory

SHL is currently conducting variant strain surveillance in partnership with established influenza surveillance sites through the state of Iowa. Identified clinics and hospitals participating in influenza surveillance are voluntarily submitting PCR positive specimens with Ct values less than 30 to SHL for COVID-19 sequencing.

Providers may submit PCR positive specimens (with Ct values less than 30) for COVID-19 sequencing if one of the following patient criteria are met:
- Patient tests PCR positive for COVID-19 within 14 days of traveling internationally
- Patient tests PCR positive for COVID-19 and is a close contact of someone who tested positive for COVID-19 within 14 days of traveling internationally
- Patient with suspected repeat infection (tests PCR positive for COVID-19 greater than 90 days after an initial positive result AND is newly symptomatic) AND who received monoclonal antibody therapy, convalescent plasma therapy, or antiviral drugs (including remdesivir) during their initial infection
- Patient tests PCR positive after completing their COVID-19 vaccine series (the positive PCR test was collected more than 2 weeks after the patient completed their vaccine series)

For interested providers, please call the Iowa Department of Public Health (IDPH) at 800-362-2736 for preapproval and submission instructions. All surveillance preapprovals will be processed Monday through Friday from 8:00am to 4:30pm. Please note that providers will not be able to receive any results for sequence testing, as testing is for surveillance purposes only and thus is not intended for clinical decision-making.

Delayed Testing for Thyroid-Stimulating Immunoglobulin

Mayo Clinic Laboratories were experiencing reagent issues that had caused delays in testing for Thyroid-Stimulating Immunoglobulin (TSI); however, these issues have now been resolved. Currently, additional runs have been added to expedite results for delayed tests, although some delays may still be expected.

Thank you for choosing MercyOne Des Moines Laboratory.
**Allergy Testing**

For patients with allergies, spring is a time for sneezing, itchy eyes, scratchy throats, and other insufferable symptoms. Ask anyone in the antihistamine aisle at the pharmacy and they might shrug their shoulders and say, “All you can do is take these pills and wait for spring to end.” This is just one of the seasonal allergy myths you may hear patients say this spring. In some cases, pollen might not be the only allergen that patients are reacting to. Since allergens stack up to an allergic threshold pollen may simply be the straw breaking the camel’s back. Along with the role of multiple allergens in making patients symptomatic, some patients may not realize that they could also be reacting to a non-allergic trigger.

So, what can we do to dispel these misunderstandings and make allergy season a little more bearable for patients? Specific IgE blood testing may be the best option available to help patients who are suffering this spring. With the help of a simple allergy blood test, you’ll be able to:

- Discover underlying allergies contributing to symptoms
- Develop an action plan to avoid specific allergen exposure
- Better differentiate between allergic and non-allergic rhinitis symptoms

MercyOne Des Moines Laboratory offers several allergy profiles as well as individual allergen testing.

- Region 8 Respiratory Allergy Profile (RAP8)
- Childhood Allergy Profile (CAP)
- Pediatric Pulmonary Allergy Panel (PPAP)
- Food Allergy Profile (FAPA).

Please see the MercyOne Des Moines Laboratory test catalog for more information.

https://mercyonedesmoineslaboratory.testcatalog.org/

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