October 2020

ALLINA HEALTH LABORATORY

LabConnect

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BILLING AND COMPLIANCE

G-Hydroxybutyric acid, serum/plasma confirmation testing

Effective Tuesday, September 22, 2020, if a confirmation is required when MedTox Laboratories performs the G-Hydroxybutyric acid, serum/plasma screening assay (1648/LAB1648), an additional charge will apply.

If Allina Health Laboratory bills your facility for testing performed, contact your Account representative for pricing details.

South Country Health Alliance MSHO (Medicare replacement) changes

On October 1, 2020, South Country Health Alliance MSHO MR began following the CMS rules for medical necessity. This means that claims for services that are subject to medical necessity need either a covered diagnosis, or a signed waiver, in order to bill.

The NCD and LCD Medical necessity policies, along with a copy of the Non-covered services waiver can be found on the Lab billing page of our website.

Test cancellation policy

Requests to cancel tests and credit your account that are received before the test is run will be honored.

Requests for cancellation and credit that are received after the test is completed cannot be honored; we will cancel the test, however, the charge will be billed back to your facility.

MICROBIOLGY

Influenza testing

This flu season will be unique as we are still in the first wave of COVID-19. The urgent ramp-up of COVID testing has limited the manufacturing capacity for all flu tests and the supply is constrained. As a result, the CDC has issued updated guidance for influenza treatment and testing during the pandemic. CDC guidelines are unequivocal that empiric antiviral treatment for influenza should be initiated based on clinical judgment, rather than influenza test results and should not be delayed to wait for SARS-CoV-2 results. Influenza testing is not routinely indicated and should be restricted to selected patients at high risk for influenza complications when clarification of the clinical diagnosis is needed.

Guidelines from the CDC and the Infectious Disease Society of America (IDSA) (look under what tests to be done for influenza) are also unequivocal that influenza testing, when needed, should be performed by PCR. ***Rapid influenza antigen testing is no longer recommended*** due to an unacceptably high rate of false negatives. Internal data confirms the poor performance of rapid antigen testing vs. PCR.

What is the impact to patient care?

Key Points:

- The decision to test and treat for influenza are uncoupled
- ***Rapid influenza antigen testing has been discontinued*** and antiviral treatment should be given empirically based on clinical judgment, including without an office visit
- In accordance with CDC and limited testing supplies, ***Influenza PCR testing should be restricted to selected ambulatory patients at high risk for complications***. Turnaround time is up to 24 hours and antiviral treatment should be given empirically without waiting for results.

Antiviral treatment of influenza:

Empiric antiviral treatment is recommended in Flu for patients at high risk for complications, patients presenting with symptoms less than 48 hrs even if not high risk, patients with severe or progressive symptoms, or symptomatic individuals who will be in close contact with high risk individuals e.g. healthcare workers etc.

Influenza PCR testing:

Influenza A/B PCR (8810/LAB89810)

Recommended for hospitalized patients or ***those at high risk to develop complications*** or if the testing will truly change management. The TAT for influenza is up to 24 hours from receipt in the Central laboratory. Utilization will be audited to preserve the limited test supply.

Influenza PCR testing:

Influenza A/B PCR (8810/LAB89810)

Recommended for hospitalized patients or ***those at high risk to develop complications*** or if the testing will truly change management. The TAT for influenza is up to 24 hours from receipt in the Central laboratory. Utilization will be audited to preserve the limited test supply.

High risk indications:

- Hospitalized patient
- Sever symptoms
- Underlying chronic illness
- Symptomatic close contact of high risk patient
- Age <2 or >65 years
- Pregnant , or within 2 weeks post-partum
- Age <18 years on ASA or salicylate containing medication
- Immunosuppresses
- BMI >40
- Resident of long-term care
- American Indian or Alaska native

If both COVID and flu PCR are ordered, separate NP swabs and tubes are required.

REFERRAL TESTING

Anti-PO antibodies assay obsolete

Immco Diagnostics has shared that effective November 13, 2020 they will discontinue performance of the Anti-PO antibodies (994/LAB994) assay.

There are no alternative test recommendations.

SUPPLIES

Aptima collection kit backorder issues

Last month we shared that due to a manufacturer backorder situation, the Aptima Unisex and Urine specimen collection kits were unavailable due to manufacturer backorder.

These items are now being released by the manufacturer on an allocation basis, and the products are available for our clients to order. Due to the allocation limitations, clients should *order only a two week supply at a time* so that we are able to provide supplies to all clients.

Thank you for your understanding!

Aptima Unisex swab specimen collection kit

Item Name: **Aptima Unisex swab specimen collection kit**

For use in collection of female endocervical or male urethral specimens

October 14, 2020

This product is available on an allocation basis only. Order a maximum of a two week supply for your site.

Aptima Urine specimen collection kit

Item Name: **Aptima Urine specimen collection kit**

Aptima urine collection kit

October 14, 2020

This product is available on an allocation basis only. Order a maximum of a two week supply for your site.

Supply catalog issue October 14, 2020

On the morning of Wednesday, October 14th, Allina Health Laboratory experienced a glitch in our electronic Supply catalog. Any supply orders placed using our catalog between 0630 and 1030 that morning were lost. The issue has been resolved at this time, but there is no way to recover the lost data. Please share with any of your staff/ sites who may have placed orders during the affected time that they will need to place a new order for the items needed.

If you have any questions, please contact Client Services at (612) 863-4678 for assistance.

Thank you for choosing Allina Health Laboratory -

We value your business!