

Clinical Laboratory Communication

Changes to Hospital Based Respiratory Testing for SARS-COV-2/FluA/FluB/RSV

SUBJECT: Changes in Flu A/B, RSV antigen testing – Transition to Cepheid SARS-COV-2-Only and SARS-COV-2, Flu A, Flu B, and RSV PCR (4-Plex) for hospital-based testing

DESCRIPTION: The VMC Laboratory will be discontinuing the following tests: Flu A/B antigen, RSV antigen, and SARS-COV-2 PCR performed on the Aries platform. Testing for these respiratory pathogens is transitioning to the Cepheid platform and will include a standalone SARS-COV-2 PCR and a 4-plex PCR that will detect SARS-COV-2, Flu A/B, and RSV.

WHY: Cepheid utilizes a molecular methodology that provides greater sensitivity and specificity compared to traditional antigen-based methods, without limitations related to the patient's age or co-infections. Viral respiratory syndromes are difficult to distinguish clinically. So instead of testing for respiratory viruses individually, the 4-plex test offers a more comprehensive and efficient test solution covering the most common respiratory viruses.

WHEN: Effective 2/11/2025, Cepheid SARS-COV-2-only and 4-Plex testing will be available options for respiratory pathogen detection.

TESTING OPTIONS:

Discontinued Test	Test Code	New Test	New Test Code	TAT
Rapid Influenza A & B Antigen	LAB1247	SARS-CoV-2, FLU A & B, RSV PCR (4-plex)	LAB2661	STAT: 45 min Routine: 2 hours
RSV Antigen (only <5 years)	LAB495			
COVID-19 PCR	LAB2590	SARS-CoV-2 Only PCR	LAB2590 (no change)	STAT 45 min Routine: 2 hours
Preference lists will be updated to reflect these changes				

No changes to other available testing options for respiratory pathogens

Test	Test code	TAT	Note
COVID IDNOW	LAB2599	STAT: 30 min Routine: 1 hour	Available for ED only
Respiratory Panel PCR (14-pathogen multiplex panel)	LAB2580	STAT: not available Routine: 48 hours	Should be reserved for the critically ill, especially those being admitted to the ICU. Does not test for SARS-COV-2.

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SPECIMEN REQUIREMENTS: Collect one nasopharyngeal swab in red or purple top UTM, using the UTM-RT kit. Double bag and transport to Laboratory.

IMPORTANT LIMITATIONS: Recent FluMist® exposure may cause false positive influenza results. It can also interfere with detecting SARS-CoV-2, RSV A, and RSV B resulting in false negatives for these tests.

RESULT REPORTING:

Chart Review

The screenshot displays the Epic EMR interface for a patient named Danny. The 'Chart Review' tab is active, showing a list of lab results. The most recent result is for 'SARS-CoV-2, Flu A & B, RSV PCR' completed on 2/5/2025. The results are as follows:

Component	Result
SARS-CoV-2, NAA	Negative
Flu A	Negative
Flu B	Negative
RSV	Negative

The interface also shows a 'Pathology Case # 25V4MCM001' and a 'Narrative' section with details about the test and the patient's condition.

This screenshot shows the 'Lab Reports' section of the Epic EMR interface. It displays a list of lab results for the same patient. The results are as follows:

Test	Result
SARS-CoV-2, NAA	Negative
Influenza A	Negative
Influenza B	Negative
RSV	Negative

The interface also shows a 'VIRAL TESTS' section with a summary of the results.

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ACTION:

- Clinicians and staff should review available testing and ensure appropriate test selection based on clinical needs.
- Clinicians may need to add the new tests as a favorite on preference lists.
- **Discontinuation of Antigen Testing:** Flu A/B and RSV antigen orders will no longer be available.

CONTACT INFORMATION:

For questions or additional information, please reach out to:

- **Christina Kwong, MD, PhD.** – VMC Lab Medical Director
christina_kwong@valleymed.org
- **Albert Cabrera** – Lab Director | albert_cabrera@valleymed.org
- **Honora Estes** – Lab Ops & Quality Manager | honora_estes@valleymed.org

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