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**TO:** **UCH Medical Staff, Housestaff, Patient Care Centers, and Outpatient Clinics**

**FROM:** Laboratory Service Center

**RE:** Change in Herpes Simplex Virus (HSV) IgM Antibody Testing Send Outs

Effective immediately Laboratory Service Center will stop send outs for Herpes Simplex Virus (HSV) IgM Antibody, due to testing being discontinued at Mayo Clinic Laboratories, our reference laboratory.

HSV IgM testing has several limitations, including:

- 1) the inability to accurately differentiate between HSV-1 and HSV-2,
- 2) prolonged time (10-21 days) between infection and seroconversion,
- 3) prolonged positivity (3-6 months or longer) of anti-HSV IgM antibodies following infection.

Collectively, these characteristics significantly limit the use of anti-HSV IgM as a marker of acute or recent HSV infection. Furthermore, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the Infectious Diseases Society of America (IDSA) and the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) do not recommend anti-HSV IgM antibody testing. For diagnosis of acute HSV infection, molecular testing for clinically-affected areas (e.g., genital or dermal lesions, blood, CSF) is recommended. For determination of patient exposure history to HSV, type-specific HSV IgG testing is recommended.

**Recommended Alternative Tests:**

Herpes Simplex Virus (HSV), Qualitative PCR, non-CSF (Test Code HSVPCR)

Herpes Simplex Virus (HSV), Qualitative PCR, blood (Test Code LHSVBS)

Meningitis/Encephalitis Panel, PCR, CSF (Test Code MEPNL)

Herpes simplex type 1 and 2 IgG Ab (Test Code HSVABB)

**References:**

- Landry ML. Immunoglobulin M for Acute Infection: True or False? Clin Vaccine Immuno. 2016;23(7):540-545.
- Miller M et. al. A Guide to Utilization of the Microbiology laboratory for Diagnosis of Infectious Diseases: 2018 Update by the Infectious Diseases Society of America and the American Society for Microbiology. Clin Infect Dis. 2018;67(6):e1-e94.
- CDC. Sexually Transmitted Diseases Treatment Guidelines, 2015. MMWR. 2015;64(3).

If you have any questions, please contact Laboratory Service Center at 773-702-1316 or Vera Tesic, MD at 773-702-2677.