



AT THE FOREFRONT
UChicago
Medicine

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DATE: March 11, 2020
TO: UCH Medical Staff, House staff, Patient Care Centers, and Outpatient Clinics
FROM: Kathleen G. Beavis, MD, Medical Director of Microbiology and Immunology Laboratories
RE: **Respiratory Panel testing**

Effective March 11, 2019 the Clinical Microbiology and Immunology Laboratories will begin performing Respiratory Panel testing using an updated version of the assay currently in use in the laboratory.

The BioFire FilmArray Respiratory Panel 2 (RP2) is an FDA-cleared multiplex PCR assay for the simultaneous and rapid detection of 21 pathogens directly from nasopharyngeal (NP) or bronchoalveolar lavage (BAL) samples. It contains updated assays that improve upon the sensitivity of the previous assay, and includes 1 additional target, *Bordetella parapertussis*.

Although this assay detects both *Bordetella pertussis* and *parapertussis*, the FDA suggests that if a patient presents with symptoms matching the clinical case definition of “whooping cough” the preferred test is a standalone pertussis/parapertussis assay. If whooping cough is specifically suspected, additional testing may be warranted. Consider ordering a Miscellaneous Lab Sendout (code: SNDOUT) and request *B. pertussis* and *parapertussis* PCR (Mayo code: BPRP). This sendout test requires additional collection of an NP aspirate specimen in a sterile container (not viral transport).

Specimen and transport requirements: Unchanged

NP swabs should be collected with a flocked swab and submitted in viral transport medium. NP aspirates and BAL specimens can be submitted in viral transport or in sterile containers.

Test ordering information: Unchanged

Use order code RBVP.

Testing Schedule and turnaround time:

Testing is performed 24/7, with results typically available within 3 hours of specimen receipt in the Clinical Microbiology and Immunology Laboratory.

If you have any questions, please contact Scott Matushek, Laboratory Manager, in the Clinical Microbiology and Immunology Laboratories at 773-702-4116.