

To: Medical Staff, House staff, Nursing Staff, Patient Care Centers, and Outpatient Clinics

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Subject: Direct Bilirubin Reflex Testing to Reduce Cancellations Due to Hemolysis at UCM Hyde Park Main Laboratory

Effective Date: 10/28/2026

Laboratory Section: Chemistry

Summary:

Effective October 28, 2026, the Hyde Park Clinical Chemistry Laboratory will implement reflex testing for direct bilirubin in specimens with hemolysis exceeding the acceptable interference limit for the primary diazo-based method (Roche). These specimens will be tested using an alternative vanadate oxidation-based method, which is more resistant to hemolysis interference.

Reflex testing will be performed automatically based on the degree of hemolysis detected by the laboratory analyzers in specimens submitted for direct bilirubin testing, whether ordered individually or as part of a panel. If hemolysis exceeds the acceptable interference limit for the alternative method, the test will be canceled with an appropriate comment.

The reflex-method result will be reported in place of the primary-method result in both the Results Review and Lab Reports views in Epic. Results obtained using the vanadate oxidation-based method will include a comment identifying the methodology used.

Concurrently, the Pediatric Direct Bilirubin (PEDBC) order will be discontinued. Providers should order the standard Direct Bilirubin test (test code: BC) for all patients, including pediatric patients.

We anticipate that this reflex algorithm will reduce cancellations due to hemolysis. Because reflex testing requires additional specimen handling and analysis, results for specimens meeting the reflex criteria may have a slightly longer turnaround time.

If there are any questions regarding this change, please contact:

- The UCM Clinical Chemistry Lab – Hyde Park at 773-702-1772.
- Clarence Chan, MD, PhD, Associate Medical Director, Clinical Chemistry Service, clarence.chan@bsd.uchicago.edu.
- Melissa S. Pessin, MD, PhD, Interim Medical Director, Clinical Chemistry Service, Melissa.Pessin@bsd.uchicago.edu.