

DATE:	30 March 2026
TO:	All Physicians and Other Ordering Providers Excluding Calgary Zone
FROM:	Microbiology, Alberta Precision Laboratories (APL)
RE:	Provincial Implementation of Legionella Urine Antigen Testing

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Key Message

- **Effective** April 7, 2026, Legionella urine antigen testing will be available provincially to assist in the diagnosis of severe community-acquired pneumonia when Legionnaire's disease is suspected.
- This test complements the currently available *Legionella* NAT/PCR performed on bronchoalveolar lavage and other lower respiratory tract specimens.

Background

- Previously, *Legionella* urine antigen testing was routinely available in the Calgary Zone and was only performed by special request in other areas.
- This test is **indicated only for severe community-acquired pneumonia** and should be used when an appropriate lower respiratory tract specimen cannot be obtained.
- The BinaxNOW Legionella Urine Antigen test detects *L. pneumophila* serogroup 1 only. It does not detect infections caused by other *L. pneumophila* serogroups and other *Legionella* spp..
- A negative urine antigen result does not exclude *Legionella* infection. Clinical correlation and consideration of molecular testing on lower respiratory tract specimens remain important.
- Antigen testing can be ordered in Epic/Connect Care using "Legionella Antigen, Urine."
- Nucleic acid testing/PCR on lower respiratory tract specimens can be ordered in Epic/Connect Care using "Legionella NAT."
- Testing is performed at the Edmonton Base Lab and Calgary DSC hub laboratories.

Questions/Concerns

- Dr. Peet van der Walt, Medical Microbiologist, Edmonton Base Lab, APL, petrus.vanderwalt@albertaprecisionlabs.ca

Approved by

- Dr. Erene Farag, Associate Medical Director, Edmonton Base Lab, APL
- Dr. Carolyn O'Hara, Chief Medical Laboratory Officer (Interim), APL