

DATE:	25 May 2026
TO:	All Health Care Providers Ordering Tests in Connect Care
FROM:	Alberta Precision Laboratories
RE:	Seasonal Suspension of Rapid Influenza and RSV NAT (PCR)

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Key Messages

- Effective June 1, Rapid Influenza and RSV NAT (PCR) will be temporarily unavailable until October 1.
- Influenza and RSV testing remain available when clinically indicated (e.g., travel-related risk) using the respiratory pathogen panel (RPP). Criteria for testing must be provided.
- Rapid COVID-19 PCR continues to be available as a standalone test.

Background/Rationale

- Rapid Influenza and RSV NAT was discontinued during the summer months of 2024 and 2025 due to low or absent circulation of these viruses.
- This approach resulted in significant cost savings without any reported clinical impact.
- Seasonal suspension of Rapid Influenza and RSV NAT will continue annually. While dates may be adjusted in response to viral activity, suspension will typically occur from June 1 to September 30.

Action Required

- Order respiratory virus testing using the *Respiratory Infection (inc. COVID-19 NAT)* Connect Care order. Provide patient disposition and indications for testing accurately.
- Do not rely solely on respiratory virus test results to determine discontinuation of isolation precautions. Symptoms remain the primary criterion. Consult your local infection prevention and control team as needed.
- Review the *Respiratory Infection NAT Order* tip sheet in the COVID-19 section of the Emergency, Medicine Specialties, and Critical Care Specialties CMIO Learning Home Dashboards.

Resources

- Access additional respiratory virus test information from the APL test directory ([Alberta Precision Laboratories | Lab Services](#))
- Review information on respiratory viruses' circulation, illnesses, case hospitalizations, and vaccinations: [Respiratory virus dashboard | alberta.ca](#)
- If you encounter a suspect avian influenza case, refer to: [H5N1 Avian Influenza Laboratory Testing](#)

Questions/Concerns

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Approved by

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