



# Laboratory Medicine Bulletin

## NEW Respiratory Virus Testing Algorithm

January 16, 2019

Effective February 4, 2019, the Diagnostic Virology and Reference Laboratory (DVRL) will transition to a new testing algorithm (including a new testing platform) for respiratory viruses.

All nasopharyngeal swabs submitted for detection of respiratory viruses will be tested for **influenza A**, **influenza B** and **RSV** using a rapid molecular platform (Cepheid GeneXpert®).

The new platform will enable faster turnaround times in reporting influenza A, influenza B and RSV. Multiple runs will be performed during daytime hours rather than batched once daily.

The current multiplex respiratory panel (which also includes human metapneumovirus, parainfluenza 1/2/3 and adenovirus) will continue to be performed once daily on samples from patients who:

- 1) test negative on the rapid GeneXpert® test **AND**
- 2) have clinical indications for further testing (critical care; organ transplant recipients; HIV/AIDS; cystic fibrosis)

The new algorithm is intended to reduce the time to optimize antiviral treatment and implementation of infection prevention and control precautions (droplet/contact).

If your patient does not meet these criteria but you feel additional viral testing would change clinical management, please call the DVRL at (604) 806-8420.

Respiratory virus testing at the DVRL is indicated for inpatients and patients in the Emergency Department with risk factors for developing severe complications from influenza.