



Laboratory Medicine Bulletin

NEW Lymphogranuloma Venereum (LGV) PCR assay

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Lymphogranuloma venereum (LGV) is a sexually transmitted infection caused by specific serovars (L1, L2 or L3) of *Chlamydia trachomatis*.

Since 2010, there has been a significant increase in laboratory-confirmed cases of rectal LGV in British Columbia, affecting primarily men who have sex with men (MSM), many of whom are HIV positive [[BCMJ,60\(4\);May 2018](#)].

Initially, rectal LGV presents as proctocolitis and severe infections mimic an acute presentation of inflammatory bowel disease, including rectal pain, bloody discharge and tenesmus. Left untreated, chronic LGV may result in rectal strictures, fistulas, abscesses and scarring.

For treatment purposes, it is important to differentiate between LGV and chlamydia infections caused by other serovars.

Previously, specimens for LGV testing were sent to a reference laboratory and test results were not always available in a clinically relevant timeframe.

Effective immediately, all rectal swabs which test positive for *Chlamydia trachomatis* by NAT will automatically be tested for LGV serotypes by an in-house laboratory developed PCR assay. This LGV specific assay was validated in collaboration with [GGD Amsterdam](#); its performance characteristics are available on demand.

For any testing inquiries, or for LGV testing requests on specimens other than rectal swabs, please contact a St. Paul's Hospital Medical Microbiologist at (604) 806-8184.