



Department of Health and Human Services
Maine Center for Disease Control and Prevention
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Re: Bordetella pertussis –Temporary discontinuation of culture

June 1, 2012

Dear HETL Client,

Due to numerous outbreaks of Bordetella pertussis currently throughout Maine, testing demand has increased significantly for Bordetella pertussis at the state public health lab. In order to increase sample throughput and provide more timely results for clinicians and MeCDC epidemiologists **HETL will temporarily suspend offering B pertussis culture effective immediately**. While culture is important early on in identifying outbreaks, the polymerase chain reaction (PCR) provides superior sensitivity, turnaround time and does not require the use of media. Culture will be reserved only for MeCDC epidemiologists in outbreak investigations. HETL will resume offering culture to clients when specimen volume returns to baseline levels.

Key Points:

- Clients should select **Bordetella species-PCR only** on the HETL requisition when ordering this test.
- If Bordetella pertussis (culture and spp. PCR) is ordered **it will be reflexed to Bordetella species-PCR only**
- Clients will be **billed for B pertussis PCR only**
- When ordering kits be advised that materials for culture will no longer be included or available for order.
- **When collecting please follow the specific guidelines for PCR ONLY**

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