From: UCSF-GME
Subject: FROM CLINICAL LABS -- Test and Procedural Changes
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TO: UCSF PHYSICIANS

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RE: TEST AND PROCEDURAL CHANGES

New CMV DNA Test

Clinical Laboratories will begin performing a quantitative viral load test for cytomegalovirus (CMV) DNA using an in-house PCR method for blood samples, effective Monday, March 9. Currently, samples are sent to an outside lab. The new test will be performed on EDTA plasma on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays and is capable of accurate quantitation between 1000 and 5 x 10e6 copies/ml.

The assay can reliably detect CMV DNA to a limit of about 100 copies/ml. Samples with DNA detected below 1,000 copies/ml will be reported as "Detected, < 1,000 copies/ml." There is no exact number indicative of disease but consecutive tests trending upwards and high values are suggestive.

Prior results from outside labs may differ somewhat from UCSF results due to differences in test methods. CMV PCR on non-blood samples will continue to be sent to outside labs.

CMV Antigen Test Discontinued

The more sensitive CMV PCR will replace the CMV Antigen Detection test on Monday, March 23. The new quantitative PCR test has no time limit for delivering samples to the lab and neutropenia will not affect results.

For more information, see the UCSF clinical laboratory manual at http://labmed.ucsf.edu/labmanual/mftlng-mtzn/test/test-index.html or contact the Virology Laboratory at 353-4730, Dr. Larry Drew at 885-7315 or Dr. Steve Miller at 353-9630.

STAT Gram Stain Results Online

Effective Monday, March 9, laboratory staff will no longer provide results by phone of STAT gram stains on specimens from normally nonsterile sites including urine specimens, unless specimens are from the operating rooms. These results will be available online in STOR and UCare generally within an hour of receipt in the laboratory.

Results of STAT gram stains of specimens from operating rooms, body fluids and other normally sterile sites will be provided by phone to the person whose pager number is on the requisition. These are considered the microbiology equivalent of critical values.

For more information, contact Dr. Geo. F. Brooks, director of the Microbiology Section of Clinical Labs, at geo.f.brooks@ucsf.edu or 353-1943.