

**DEPARTMENT OF PATHOLOGY
UNIVERSITY OF IOWA HEALTH CARE
Policy and Procedure Manual**

This policy is utilized at the following locations:

- √ Emory Warner Laboratories √ Iowa River Landing Laboratory
√ Medical Center North Liberty Laboratory

REFLEX AND CONFIRMATORY TESTING

PURPOSE

To ensure reflex or confirmatory testing occurs when initial test results are positive or outside acceptable reference range values and indicate a second related test is medically necessary.

POLICY

The Department of Pathology provides reflex or confirmatory testing only when medically necessary and as ordered by the physician. In addition to the information provided in the laboratory handbook, this policy is provided annually in a Pathology Laboratory Broadcast titled, "Policies and Practices Concerning Additional/Reflex Testing in Pathology".

PROCEDURE

All laboratory testing requires a written or electronic order signed by a Licensed Independent Practitioner (LIP). Some laboratory tests or procedures may yield results which require additional testing for optimal clinical care. The Department of Pathology has well-defined policies and practices for initiating additional/reflex testing but recognizes that clinical situations may arise in which such testing might not be desired. The purpose of the information below is to provide a basic description of current policies and practices and to remind all LIPs that they may contact the Pathology Department at any time regarding additional/reflex testing for any patient(s). The standard policies and practices are listed below.

Section Specific Policies and Practices Concerning Additional/Reflex Testing in the Department of Pathology:

Anatomic Pathology

- Performs additional testing per established procedures as deemed medically necessary unless prohibited by the ordering provider. Examples include special stains, immunohistochemical (IHC) stains, in situ hybridization (ISH), and molecular studies.
- Performs reflex Human Papilloma Virus (HPV) testing as requested if the patient has an ASCUS pap result.

Core Laboratories

- Performs confirmatory testing per established procedures as deemed medically necessary. Examples: Positive initial tests for HIV (antigen/antibody combo assay), syphilis IgG, and Lyme disease (ELISA) HIV and syphilis IgG positive screens are automatically reflexed to established reflex protocols. Lyme disease reactive or equivocal tests are reflexed to reference laboratory for Western blot analysis

Special Care Nursery Laboratory

- Does not perform additional testing without a signed physician order.

North Dodge Laboratory

- Does not perform additional testing without a signed physician order.

DeGowin Blood Center

- Performs additional testing per established procedures as deemed medically necessary.
- Performs reflex testing when the initial test results are positive and indicated related tests are appropriate and when the ordering provider has not prohibited it.
- Performs antibody identification and related testing necessary to provide compatible blood products, to investigate reports of adverse transfusion reactions, and to complete pre-natal testing.

Microbiology and Molecular Pathology

- Performs additional testing per established procedures as deemed medically necessary unless prohibited by the ordering provider. Examples: susceptibility testing on clinically relevant pathogens when isolated from a specimen; probe testing for *M. tuberculosis* and *M. avium* complexes when growth in mycobacterial cultures is detected.
- Performs confirmatory testing per established procedures as deemed medically necessary. Example: Incomplete identification of organisms by biochemical testing may be supplemented with ribosomal DNA sequencing.
- HPV16 and HPV18 test results are reflexively reported for women ages 30-65 years old with a normal cytology or Pap test who have a positive high risk HPV PCR result.

Iowa River Landing Laboratory

- Does not perform additional testing without a signed physician order.

Medical Center North Liberty Laboratory

- Follows the reflex testing as outlined at the Medical Center University Pathology Laboratory. Testing is forwarded to the appropriate MCU testing section for reflex testing

Mailout Services

- Transmits orders to accredited referral laboratories for testing on University of Iowa Health Care patients on behalf of UI Health Care. Referral laboratories will have individual reflex testing activities based on their established procedures and medical necessity.
- Performs additional testing per established procedures as deemed medically necessary unless prohibited by the ordering provider.

Questions may be directed to Dr. Matthew Krasowski, Vice-Chair for Clinical Pathology and Laboratory Services. (319-384-9380, e-mail: matthew-krasowski@uiowa.edu)

REFERENCE

[The Office of Inspector General's Compliance Program Guidance for Clinical Laboratories, August 1998](#)

[Pathology Handbook](#)