



AT THE FOREFRONT
UChicago
Medicine

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DATE: April 23, 2019
TO: UCH Medical Staff, Housestaff, Patient Care Centers, and Outpatient Clinics
FROM: Angella Charnot-Katsikas, MD, Assistant Medical Director
Scott Matushek, Laboratory Manager
Kathleen G. Beavis, MD, Medical Director
Clinical Microbiology and Immunology Laboratory
RE: Viral load quantitative PCR testing for HIV, HBV, HCV, and CMV

Effective April 25, 2019, Viral load quantitative PCR testing for HIV, HBV, HCV, and CMV will be performed using updated versions of the previous assays, on the new Roche cobas 6800 instrument platform.

Performance verification of these updated assays was performed in the UCM Clinical Microbiology and Immunology Laboratory, and detection (presence or absence of the specific target) showed excellent correlation with the previous versions for all 4 assays.

Quantitative results (viral load) from the updated assay versions also showed excellent correlation for the HIV, HBV, and HCV assays. However, for **CMV, quantitation was determined to be consistently higher by approximately 0.3 log for the new assay version as compared with the previous version. Therefore, quantitative results of the two CMV assay versions are not interchangeable, and it will be necessary to evaluate any change in quantitation in conjunction with clinical status.** CMV viral load results will be reported with a comment alerting users to this change.

There are some minor changes in detection limits and quantitation ranges with the new assays. These new ranges will be reported with patient results.

Assay	New range	Previous range
HIV	20 – 6,000,000 IU/mL	20 – 5,000,000 IU/mL
HBV	6.6 – 100,000,000 IU/mL	20 – 50,000,000 IU/mL
HCV	12 – 30,000,000 IU/mL	15 – 25,000,000 IU/mL
CMV	34.5 – 4,000,000 IU/mL	91 – 3,000,000 IU/mL

Test codes in Epic are unchanged.

Collection and transport requirements are unchanged (Blood in 10 mL EDTA lavender-top tube).

For questions, please contact Scott Matushek, Laboratory Manager, at 773-702-4116, or Angella Charnot-Katsikas, MD, Assistant Medical Director, at 773-834-2473.