

# Laboratory Services

Requests for outpatient laboratory services must be made in writing from the attending physician. For your convenience the Laboratory has developed a number of test requisition forms. These include a general laboratory form, an anatomic pathology form and a GYN (pap smear) form. To meet regulatory requirements, verbal orders need to be followed up with a written order. These may be faxed to the Main Hospital Laboratory at 540-741-1153. To meet laboratory regulatory requirements, a clinical diagnosis and preferably a specific ICD-9 code must be included on all orders.

## Pre-Admission Testing

All physicians are encouraged to take advantage of pre-admission testing. To obtain more information, call Pre Admission Testing department at 540-741-4669.

**Pre-admission testing for Blood Bank:** Pre-surgical patient's blood bank orders can be performed up to 10 days prior to surgery provided the patient has no history of a blood transfusion or a pregnancy over the past 3 months.

## Inpatient Requests

Requests for laboratory services are generated through the hospital's information systems by nursing, using the order/entry mode. Cytology and microbiology specimens, in addition to being ordered through the order entry module, must be accompanied by a computer-generated or floor collection requisition form.

## Inpatient Ordering

- **A.M. Draw Requests:** A.M. orders default to 4:00 a.m. of the morning following entry of the order into the computer system. Specimens are collected between 4:00 a.m. and 5:30 a.m. and are incorporated into the routine workload. Test results are usually available by 6:00 a.m. daily.
- **Timed Requests:** This priority should be used for time dependent test orders such as therapeutic drug monitoring or coagulation testing. Timed orders are collected within 10 minutes of the specification and the test is prioritized in the laboratory to be performed and reported ahead of other routine work.
- **TODAY Requests:** Specimens that are ordered TODAY will be collected within 2 hours or sooner of order and the test will be performed and reported ahead of any routine work in progress.

- **STAT Request:** This priority applies to those tests approved by the medical staff for the STAT list and is the priority routinely used in the Emergency Department. In general, the following turn around times apply for STAT list procedures:
  - Hematology: 40 minutes
  - Chemistry: 60 minutes
  - Gram stains: 30 minutes
  - Blood Bank: 45 minutes

## Outpatient Requests

Routine outpatient specimens are delivered to the laboratory on a regular basis by courier. These specimens are processed upon arrival. The majority of routine test requests are available within approximately 24 hours.

STAT requests can be best accomplished by having the patient present directly to a patient service center. STAT courier pickup is also available by calling 540-741-2725. These specimens will be analyzed promptly upon receipt.

## Laboratory Reporting

Routine clinical and anatomical pathology reports are usually available within 24 hours of specimen receipt. The laboratory accommodates a variety of reporting mechanisms including hard copy laboratory report delivery to doctor's offices by courier and auto faxing of laboratory reports, the timing of which is tailored to the individual client's needs. In addition, physicians with an affiliation with Mary Washington Hospital, may view all laboratory results on the web based physician dashboard system. This system not only provides access to laboratory reports but provides a lifetime clinical patient record encompassing clinical laboratory reports, anatomical pathology reports, radiology reports, consultation reports, history and physicals, emergency department visit reports, operative reports, and discharge summaries. Further information about accessibility to the Physician Dashboard System may be obtained by contacting the hospital's Information Services Department at 540-741-1122.

## Critical Values

The Mary Washington Hospital Medical Executive Committee annually approves, on behalf of the medical staff, a list of those laboratory results which may be considered immediately life threatening. For inpatients, all critical results are called to

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nursing personnel or directly to the covering physician. Similar policies are utilized for outpatients. During routine office hours, the physician's office will be called for critical values. When office is closed, the requesting physician or his/her coverage will be contacted for critical values. In rare circumstances, the laboratory may contact the patient directly or advise the patient to seek medical care through the Emergency Department if the requesting physician or cover cannot be contacted in a reasonable period of time. Phoned test results require the person receiving the report read back the results.

### **Mayo Medical Laboratories (MML) Connection**

The Department of Pathology and Laboratory Medicine has a referral relationship with MML and is used as our primary reference laboratory. MML affiliation is based on Mayo Clinic's primary value of "the needs of the patient come first." MML brings more than 30 years of experience, promoting a collaborative approach to the practice of laboratory medicine.

MML gives physicians and clients access, directly or through Pathology Associates of Fredericksburg, to a large variety of consultative services. Second opinions can be readily obtained, encompassing the full scope of clinical laboratory and anatomical pathology services.