

January 2010

Discontinuation of Diphtheria and Tetanus Serology testing at PHL

To health care providers:

Effective April 1, 2010, the Ontario Agency for Health Protection and Promotion (OAHPP) Public Health Laboratories will discontinue testing for diphtheria and tetanus serology.

This decision was made after an extensive review of the literature and discussions with key stakeholders.

Serology testing for anti-toxin immunoglobulins is not warranted at this time because:

- The Canadian Immunization Guide recommends a primary immunization schedule for a patient based on their age when adequate immunization records are not available.
- The presence of anti-toxin IgG as measured by the current Enzyme immunoassay (EIA) test does not necessarily guarantee protection against infection.

In the rare event of an adverse reaction to tetanus and diphtheria vaccine or the possibility of immunodeficiency in the patient, serological testing may be warranted and we recommend you discuss the situation with a medical microbiologist.

For further information:

- OAHPP molecular surveillance laboratory in Toronto at **416-235-5892** or your local OAHPP laboratory.
- Canadian Immunization Guide, 2006
<http://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/publicat/ciq-gci/index-eng.php>
- WHO module Diphtheria.
http://www.who.int/vaccines-documents/DocsPDF-IBI-e/mod2_e.pdf
- OAHPP Laboratory Helpline **1-800-640-7221**
- For the OAHPP Specimen Collection Guide and previous Labstracts refer to <http://www.oahpp.ca/publichealthlaboratories.php>