



April 2008

## Hepatitis C Virus - Anti-HCV Positive Results, Next Steps

To Health Care Providers

If you receive a reactive hepatitis C antibody (Anti-HCV) result on your patient, this result indicates exposure to the hepatitis C virus (HCV). If you receive an inconclusive Anti-HCV result on your patient, this result indicates possible exposure to HCV or a non-specific antibody reactivity.

### Next Steps

For reactive or inconclusive Anti-HCV results, additional testing for the active virus is recommended to determine your patient's accurate status and to assist with treatment.

Please submit a 2.5ml frozen serum or frozen plasma sample to the Ontario Public Health Laboratory for HCV RNA testing accompanied by a completed OPHL Test Requisition Form and a Laboratory Information Form (F-C-HE-036).

These two forms are available at:

[www.health.gov.on.ca/english/providers/pub/labs/specimen.html](http://www.health.gov.on.ca/english/providers/pub/labs/specimen.html)).

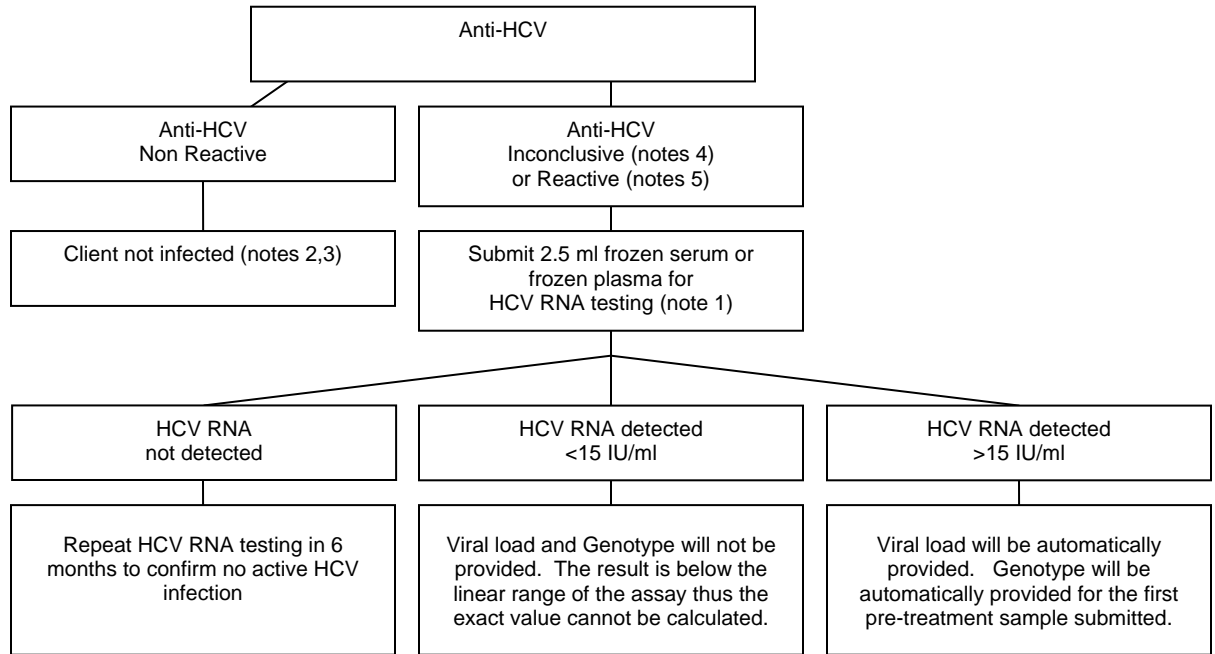
Attached is an HCV Testing Algorithm for supplementary reference.

### For Further Information:

- Contact the Hepatitis Laboratory at **416-235-5737**
- Refer to the Specimen Collection Guide at [www.health.gov.on.ca/english/providers/pub/labs/specimen.html](http://www.health.gov.on.ca/english/providers/pub/labs/specimen.html)
- OPHL HELPLINE at 1-800-640-7221
- Ontario Public Health Laboratories (2008). Hepatitis C Virus (HCV) RNA and Genotype Testing and Interpretation – Update. Lababstract, February 2008

## Hepatitis C Virus – Anti-HCV Positive Results, Next Steps (continued)

### HCV Testing Algorithm



#### Notes:

1. The previous qualitative and quantitative tests have been replaced with a single, more sensitive HCV RNA test.
2. If the patient is immuno-compromised (e.g. HIV), submit 2.5 ml of frozen serum or frozen plasma for HCV-RNA testing to determine if the patient has an active HCV infection. These patients may not exhibit a positive Anti-HCV result.
3. If the patient has been exposed to HCV, they may be within the incubation period (6-8 weeks) post exposure and may not yet have detectable antibody. Submit a serum sample for a repeat Anti-HCV test 6-8 weeks post exposure.
4. If the Anti-HCV result is inconclusive, and the patient has been exposed, the patient is still susceptible to HCV infection. Patients should continue to be tested after any future exposures. Inform patients that they should not donate blood, blood products and/or organs.
5. If an infant has a mother who is anti-HCV reactive then submit 2.5 ml frozen serum or frozen plasma from the infant for a HCV RNA test. Re-testing the infant for Anti-HCV is recommended between 12 months – 18 months of age, as anti-HCV results are presumed to be maternal antibodies.

For information on treatment of HCV, please refer to the 2007 Canadian Consensus Guidelines for the Management of chronic hepatitis C.