



ADVISORY

Changes to HIV Testing & Update on Drug Resistant Gonorrhoea

Friday, May 12, 2023, Peterborough

Changes to HIV Testing

The Ontario HIV Treatment Network in collaboration with the Ontario Ministry of Health has released the [Ontario Guidelines for Providers Offering HIV Testing \(2023\)](#). These guidelines were designed to assist health care providers in Ontario reach individuals who are undiagnosed. These guidelines also play a significant part in Ontario's plan to reach and exceed the [UNAIDS 95-95-95 targets](#), where 95% of all people living with HIV will know their HIV status, 95% of all people with diagnosed HIV infection will receive antiretroviral therapy, and 95% of all people on antiretroviral therapy will have virally suppressed HIV by 2025.

Key Messages

1. The window period for when a person is newly infected with HIV **has been reduced to 6 weeks (previously 3 months) for laboratory-based HIV diagnostic serology testing**. This is due to recent advances in HIV testing technology. The window period remains at 3 months for HIV Point-Of-Care (POC) tests and self-tests.
2. **HIV testing should be offered to ALL individuals who test positive for any other sexually transmitted and/or blood borne infections (STIBBIs)**, including chlamydia, gonorrhoea, infectious syphilis, hepatitis C, hepatitis B.
3. **Routine testing should be offered to at-risk members of populations with high rates of HIV**. Risk is dependent on multiple factors and practices. It is important to note that the 3P assessment (partner(s), practices, and protection) relies on the patient's disclosure, perceived risk, and knowledge of HIV (e.g. modes of transmission).
4. **Pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) and post-exposure prophylaxis (PEP)** should be discussed with individuals who are part of populations with higher rates of HIV (e.g. serodiscordant relationships, men who have sex with men, individuals who have had an STBBI in the last year, individuals who use injection drugs)
5. Symptoms of both **acute and chronic HIV** should be reviewed as they are often missed in routine care.

Additional Resources

- [Ontario Guidelines for Providers Offering HIV Testing \(2023\)](#)
 - HIV Testing Algorithm – page 6 in above guidelines
- [Canadian guideline on HIV pre-exposure prophylaxis and nonoccupational postexposure prophylaxis](#)
 - <https://doi.org/10.1503/cmaj.170494>
- PHO Rounds: The 2023 Ontario HIV Testing Guidelines.
 - Presenters: Patrick O'Byrne, NP, PhD and Dr. Austin Zygmunt, MSc, MD, CCFP, FRCPC
 - Tuesday May 23 from 12:00 p.m. to 1:00 p.m.
 - To register for this webinar, visit: [PHO Rounds: The 2023 Ontario HIV Testing Guidelines | Eventbrite](#)

Drug Resistant Gonorrhoea

Drug resistant gonorrhoea was recently identified in Ontario. The Ministry of Health and Public Health Ontario provides the following recommendations to support the clinical care of your patients.

Recommendations

1. Collection of *N. gonorrhoeae* **culture** from **all** potentially exposed sites (urethral/cervical, pharyngeal, rectal) is recommended **plus nucleic acid amplification test (NAAT)** for the following scenarios:
 - All patients with suspected gonorrhoea infection, i.e., symptomatic
 - Test of cure
 - Pelvic inflammatory disease (PID)
 - Pregnancy
 - Sexual abuse or sexual assault

NOTE: Swabs should be received within 48 hours if possible but will be accepted by the Public Health Ontario Laboratory up to 72 hours after collection.

2. Treat suspected or confirmed gonorrhoea cases as per the current recommendations in the [Ontario Gonorrhoea Testing and Treatment Guidelines \(2018\)](#).
3. Test of cure is currently recommended for **ALL** positive cases of *N. gonorrhoeae* **at all positive sites**. Culture is the preferred method for test of cure and should be performed 3-7 days after the completion of treatment. If culture is not available, test of cure by NAAT will also be accepted and should be performed at 2-3 weeks post-treatment. For any questions related to testing, please contact Public Health Ontario's Customer Service Centre by phone: 416-235-6556 or 1-877-604-4567 (Toll Free) or by email: customerservicecentre@oahpp.ca.
4. If you identify any patients with multi-drug resistant gonorrhoea infection or treatment failure, please contact the patient's local public health unit for case management and support with notification and follow up of contacts.
5. Repeat screening is recommended for all patients six months post-treatment of *N. gonorrhoeae* infection.

Additional Resources

- [Ontario Public Health Standards: Requirements for Programs, Services and Accountability Infectious Diseases Protocol: Appendix 1: Case Definitions and Disease Specific Information: Gonorrhoea](#)
- [Ontario Gonorrhoea Testing and Treatment Guidelines \(2018\)](#)
- [Canadian Guidelines on Sexually Transmitted Infections: Gonorrhoea](#)
- [Public Health Ontario Laboratory Test Information Index: *Neisseria gonorrhoeae* - Culture](#)
- [Public Health Ontario Laboratory Test Information Index: *Chlamydia trachomatis/Neisseria gonorrhoeae* \(CT/NG\) – Nucleic Acid Amplification Testing \(NAAT\)](#)

This advisory can be found on our website by visiting: www.peterboroughpublichealth.ca/health-professionals/