



**Health**

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Communicable Disease Control  
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Dear Health Care Providers,

**Re: Hepatitis C Testing and Referral**

Cadham Provincial Laboratory has added a hepatitis C antigen detection test to determine whether a patient who is hepatitis C antibody positive has an active infection. This test is in addition to the current hepatitis C RNA test where a positive result indicates an active infection. Active infection implies communicability. Please note the following:

- Either a positive hepatitis C RNA test or a positive hepatitis C core antigen test is an indicator of active infection and therefore communicability. A patient with a positive result for either test should be referred to the Viral Hepatitis Investigative Unit (VHIU) at 204-787-3630. These patients should also be referred to regional public health for follow-up.
- Neither the core antigen test nor the RNA test can distinguish between acute and chronic infection.
- The Hepatitis C Communicable Disease Management Protocol is available at: <http://www.gov.mb.ca/health/publichealth/cdc/protocol/hepc.pdf> . The protocol will be revised in 2014 to reflect these updates.
  - Where hepatitis A or B immunization is recommended in the protocol, contact information for ordering vaccines from the Provincial Vaccine Warehouse is available at: <http://www.gov.mb.ca/health/publichealth/cdc/protocol/vaccinebiologics.pdf>

**Please share this communication with all relevant colleagues in your region.**

Sincerely,

*“Original Signed by”*

Tim Hilderman, MD FRCPC  
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