



7202 NE Evergreen Parkway, Suite 100  
Hillsboro, OR 97124-7251  
Voice: 503-693-4100  
FAX: 503-693-5600  
TTY: 971-673-0372

February 3, 2020

To All OSPHL Clients,

Beginning March 1, 2020, the Oregon State Public Health Laboratory (OSPHL) will implement the syphilis testing reverse algorithm. This letter provides complete details about this change.

#### What is changing?

Beginning with specimens received March 1, 2020, the OSPHL will change the algorithm used for syphilis screening to the reverse algorithm. A revised testing algorithm is attached to this message and will be posted on our Lab Test Menu closer to the date of the change at [www.healthoregon.org/labtests](http://www.healthoregon.org/labtests).

Two ordering options will remain available:

1. Syphilis screen with confirmation
  - Use this to order screening for your patients.
  - This order begins with the Syphilis TP test.
2. Syphilis confirmation
  - Use this when the patient has a current reactive antibody test or a previous personal history of syphilis.
  - Only the RPR test will be performed.

#### Why this change?

This change provides better service to the clinicians and patients we serve and streamlines laboratory workflows. The TP assay is more specific and sensitive to syphilis and does not rely on the subjectivity of the RPR method. The automated nature of this test also means that clinicians and patients will receive final results more quickly for most patients and will require less laboratory staff time.

#### What is not changing?

Fees for laboratory testing will not change. The current fee schedule can be found at [www.healthoregon.org/phlbilling](http://www.healthoregon.org/phlbilling).

Please contact Shane Sevey, OSPHL Virology/Immunology Testing Section Manager with questions at 503-693-4154 or [shane.a.sevey@dhsosha.state.or.us](mailto:shane.a.sevey@dhsosha.state.or.us).

Sincerely,

John Fontana, PhD, (HCLD) ABB  
Director, OSPHL

Shane Sevey  
Manager, Virology/Immunology

Oregon State Public Health Laboratory – Syphilis Testing Algorithm (v. 3-1-2020)

