

June 26, 2023

Dear colleagues,

The availability of malaria diagnostics has expanded significantly across the province in recent years. Current malaria testing protocols across all BC Health Authorities and Yukon include microscopy and/or rapid diagnostic testing (RDT) before sending to BCCDC Public Health Laboratory (PHL). In addition, most Health Authorities also screen with loop-mediated isothermal amplification (LAMP) and perform microscopy and/or RDT on positive samples prior to submitting to BCCDC PHL. The BCCDC PHL currently provides off-hour STAT malaria testing for *all* malaria requests via an on-call technologist. However, given the wider availability of malaria testing highlighted above, effective immediately, the BCCDC PHL is now planning a change to its reference laboratory malaria diagnostic strategy as follows:

- Off-hour malaria STAT testing will only be performed when requested by a BCCDC Medical Microbiologist. As such if STAT malaria testing is required, please consult the BCCDC Medical Microbiologist on-call at 604-661-7033.
- Providers need to consider that routine testing will be performed on weekdays 8:00AM-4:30PM. Any testing outside of these hours including weekends and holidays will require BCCDC Medical Microbiologist approval as above.
- Off-hour malaria STAT testing will include rapid diagnostic test, microscopy +/- parasitemia. If the parasitemia has already been performed and reported at the referring hospital, it will not be performed as part of the BCCDC PHL STAT testing.

In the future, the BCCDC PHL also plans to incorporate malaria qPCR for species confirmation as part of the STAT testing offer when needed. We will send a separate update when this is available. For the time being, the BCCDC PHL malaria qPCR is routinely performed twice a week, and testing can be expedited on request.

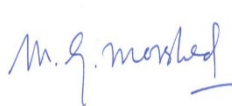
Thank you.




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