

New Test Announcement



**Rapid Staph aureus and Methicillin susceptibility PCR (molecular testing) directly from swabs from skin and soft tissue infections.
Effective 09/15/2010**

PCR – molecular testing for Methicillin Resistant Staph aureus (MRSA) and Methicillin Sensitive Staph aureus (MSSA) from swab samples collected from skin and soft tissue infections is available in our laboratory.

- The most common cause of skin and soft tissue infections is Staph aureus; MRSA represents over 50% of these infections.
- Current traditional laboratory culture methods take 48 to 72 hours to determine if a skin or soft tissue infection is Staph aureus and if the isolate is methicillin resistant or sensitive. With PCR methodology results are available within one hour of starting the testing process. Testing will be done 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.
- Correctly treating these infections will improve antimicrobial stewardship and help ensure appropriate infection control procedures.

Specimen/Transport Requirements:

- **Order: S Aureus/MRSA PCR Wound (mnemonic: MRSAPCR)**
- Skin and soft tissue samples collected on dual swabs in liquid Stuart's transport medium with a molded breakpoint on the shaft. These are available from the lab. Traditional single swabs in liquid Stuart's transport medium can also be used but there will not be a back-up swab for possible traditional culture method.
- Swabs may be stored and transported to the lab at room temperature for up to 24 hours after collection. If storage and transport will be over 24 hours the sample needs to be refrigerated. Swabs can be held up to 5 days if refrigerated.
- If traditional culture is also indicated the appropriate culture type must also be ordered and dual swabs must be submitted.

If you have questions, please contact K. Warren, M.D (218)-249-5208, Microbiology Medical Director or Deborah Fischer, MT (ASCP) (218)-249-2479, Microbiology Technical Specialist.

St. Luke's Laboratory Services has a Web page which contains New Test Announcements. <http://www.slhduluth.com/hospital/laboratory-services/>