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**Date:** Aug 29, 2020  
**To:** All Physicians and Healthcare Providers  
**From:** Alberta Precision Laboratories  
**Re:** Discontinue using APTIMA Collection Kits/Swabs for COVID-19 Testing Immediately

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**PLEASE POST OR DISTRIBUTE AS WIDELY AS APPROPRIATE**

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**Key Message:**

**DO NOT USE APTIMA<sup>®</sup> Multitest or Unisex Swabs for COVID-19 testing.**

**Use nasopharyngeal or throat swabs recommended and distributed by APL/AHS specifically for COVID-19 testing,**

APTIMA<sup>®</sup> swab specimen collection kits are the only collection kits available for *Chlamydia trachomatis* (CT) and *Neisseria gonorrhoeae* (GC) nucleic acid testing in Alberta. These swabs are in **short supply** due to global demand.

**Why this is important:**

Due to supply chain problems associated with the COVID-19 pandemic, supplies of APTIMA<sup>®</sup> swabs are being restricted globally. APL is working with the manufacturer of APTIMA<sup>®</sup> swabs to ensure an adequate supply is maintained to continue STI testing at current levels.

Early in the COVID-19 pandemic, APL recommended APTIMA<sup>®</sup> swabs for COVID-19 testing because availability of other types of collection kits was limited. Other collection kits containing nasopharyngeal or throat swabs are now available for COVID-19. **To ensure adequate supply of APTIMA<sup>®</sup> swabs for STI testing, APTIMA collection kits should not be used for COVID-19 testing.**

**Action Required:**

1. **For COVID-19 testing, use swabs OTHER than the APTIMA<sup>®</sup> swabs.**
2. **Closely monitor distribution of APTIMA<sup>®</sup> swabs and order only what is required for a one month supply.**
3. For further information on COVID-19 swabs refer to the AHS Laboratory Bulletin "COVID-19 Collection Kit Guidance"  
<https://www.albertahealthservices.ca/assets/wf/lab/wf-lab-bulletin-covid-19-collection-kit-guidance.pdf>

**Inquiries and feedback may be directed to:**

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**This bulletin has been reviewed and approved by:**

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