

H.PYLORI SEROLOGY TESTING NO LONGER AVAILABLE

10 November 2019

Valued Clients,

The Microbiology Department at Canterbury Health Laboratories would like to inform referrers that Helicobacter Pylori serology will no longer be available from January 2020. A new H. pylori rapid faecal antigen test will be introduced at the same time. It is a chromatographic immunoassay for qualitative detection of H. pylori in stool samples and will be performed daily reducing the turn-around time to result.

H. pylori serology has historically been offered as a test for the determination of IgG antibodies specific to H. pylori in serum as evidence of infection at some time. This test is unable to determine if antibodies are present as a result of active or past infection. Specificity of this test for current infection is poor.

Serologic evaluation of patients to determine the presence/absence of H. pylori infection is no longer considered clinically useful. Alternative non-invasive testing methods (e.g. stool antigen test) exist for detecting the presence of the bacteria and have demonstrated higher clinical utility, sensitivity, and specificity. H. pylori faecal antigen testing can also be used to confirm eradication following treatment.

The New Zealand Microbiology Network (<https://www.nzmn.org.nz/>) recommend stool antigen tests as the preferred testing modality for active H. pylori infection.

For more information on the H. Pylori rapid faecal antigen test please refer to Test Manager Guide on the Canterbury Health Laboratories website.

For any enquiries please contact:

Dr Joshua Freeman
Clinical Director, Microbiology
03 378 6601