



## Discontinuation of Testing for *Helicobacter pylori* Serology Tests

Effective June 6, 2016, Laboratory Alliance of CNY will no longer perform testing for *Helicobacter pylori* serology testing. Antibody tests cannot distinguish between active and past infections with adequate sensitivity and specificity, and cannot be used reliably to evaluate patients for test of cure (TOC). As a result, the American Gastroenterology Association (AGA) and the American College of Gastroenterology (ACG) no longer recommend the routine use of these serologic tests. Instead, they recommend the *Helicobacter pylori* stool antigen test or the urea breath test for diagnosis and evaluating patients for TOC. Because of these updated AGA and ACG guidelines and the documented poor sensitivities of the serologic tests, many insurance carriers have implemented policies whereby they will no longer reimburse for *Helicobacter pylori* serologic tests. In addition, many reference laboratories have discontinued *Helicobacter pylori* serologic testing as a diagnostic service.

The test codes listed below will be discontinued:

- *Helicobacter pylori* Antibody, IgA (test code: HPIGA)
- *Helicobacter pylori* Antibody, IgG (test code: HPIGG)
- *Helicobacter pylori* Antibody, IgM (test code: HPIGM)

The *Helicobacter pylori* Stool Antigen test (Test Code: HPSAG) is performed Monday – Friday. The specimen required is unpreserved, soft to formed stool the size of a marble in a clear, leakproof container. The specimen should be stored and transported at 2-8°C within 72 hours. Watery or diarrheal specimens, stool collected in transport media or preservatives, or swabs are unacceptable and will be rejected.

Questions regarding the stool antigen test may be directed to Russ Rawling, MS, M(ASCP)SM, RM(NRM)SM, Manager of Microbiology, at 315-410-7060 or [russellrawling@lacny.com](mailto:russellrawling@lacny.com).