

## **DIATHERIX Laboratories introduces two new tests: Influenza Panel (FLU) and Group B *Streptococcus* (GBS)**

### **Influenza Panel (FLU)**

Ahead of the coming flu season, DIATHERIX has created an Influenza panel to fill in the gap left from other flu diagnostics. Rapid influenza diagnostic tests (RIDT) have poor sensitivity leading to a high rate of false negative results. Other areas of concern are their inability to distinguish between subtypes, which can impact therapy, and the potential for false positive results (1). Many studies have now shown that nucleic acid amplification tests (NAAT), typically performed with the polymerase chain reaction method (PCR), are more sensitive for the detection of influenza viruses than RIDTs (2, 3, 4). Concerns over the higher cost of NAAT/PCR tests compared to RIDTs were recently addressed by Dr. Ginocchio in the *Journal of Clinical Microbiology*. “Although the cost may be higher than that of RIDTs, the enhanced performance far outweighs the added expense. Performing one NAAT would be less expensive overall than performing RIDTs with the necessity of subjecting negative samples to additional testing” (1).

DIATHERIX uses Tem-PCR, an enhanced form of NAAT/PCR testing. The Influenza Panel is accurate, timely, cost-effective, and differentiates between:

- Influenza A – Human Influenza
- Influenza A – H1N1-09
- Influenza B
- Parainfluenza virus type 1
- Parainfluenza virus type 2
- Parainfluenza virus type 3
- Parainfluenza virus type 4

The four Parainfluenza virus types have been included in this panel because Parainfluenza infections often present with similar symptoms to that of Influenza A. Parainfluenza can lead to serious lower respiratory tract infections if not detected early and treated properly.

1. Welch, David F., Ginocchio, Christine C. **Role of Rapid Immunochromatographic Antigen Testing in Diagnosis of Influenza A Virus 2009 H1N1 Infection** *J. Clin. Microbiol.* 2010 48: 22-25
2. **Faix, D. J., S. S. Sherman, and S. H. Waterman.** 2009. Rapid-test sensitivity for novel swine-origin influenza A (H1N1) virus in humans. *N. Engl. J. Med.* 361:728– 729.
3. **Ginocchio, C. C., F. Zhang, R. Manji, S. Arora, M. Bornfreund, L. Falk, M. Lotlikar, M. Kowerska, G. Becker, D. Korologos, M. de Geronimo, and J. M. Crawford.** 2009. Evaluation of multiple test methods for the detection of the novel 2009 influenza A (H1N1) during the New York City outbreak. *J. Clin. Virol.* 45:191–195.
4. **Vasoo, S., J. Stevens, and K. Singh.** 2009. **Rapid antigen tests for diagnosis of pandemic (swine) influenza A/H1N1.** *Clin. Infect. Dis.* 49:1090–1093.

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**Group B *Streptococcus* (GBS)**

DIATHERIX will now be offering a Group B *Streptococcus* test that has applications in a couple of areas in infectious disease. With this inclusion of this test, DIATHERIX can better meet the needs of OB GYN practices testing pregnant women for pathogens that could be passed on to the child during birth. While Group B Strep usually causes no problems for adults who carry the bacteria, it can cause a serious infection in a newborn. Adults with chronic medical conditions that impair their immune system, however, can develop serious bloodstream infections or pneumonia from Group B Strep. Group B Strep has also been identified as the cause of urinary tract infections.