

MEMORANDUM

TO: All Regional Medical Laboratory Clients
FROM: William Fitter, MD, Chief of Clinical Chemistry
Mary Pille, MT(ASCP) SBB, Manager of Chemistry Department
DATE: June 16, 2015
SUBJECT: **Specimen Collection for Lead Testing**

On September 15, 2014, Regional Medical Laboratory (RML) started performing whole blood lead testing in-house. Accurate measurement of blood levels in children is paramount in identifying individuals at risk for lead-related toxicity. The method utilized by RML may result in falsely low levels when under-filled EDTA collection (tubes or bullets) are used. Consequently, under-filled tubes are rejected for analysis, requiring recollection and inconvenience to our patients and clients.

At RML, we recognize the difficulty inherent in collecting sufficient blood sample volume from babies and small children. The method utilized by RML allows the use of **heparin no-gel** (tubes and bullets) as an acceptable alternative if you anticipate a difficult draw and may not be able to fill an EDTA (tube or bullet). Heparin no-gel tubes will not interfere with lead testing.

As a reminder, any sample resulted as 5.0 ug/dL or greater will be reported to the Oklahoma State Department of Health (OSDH). If blood collection was taken from a finger stick (also called capillary) and the result of the capillary test is 5 µg/dL or greater, the OSDH requires recollection and submission of a venous sample to the laboratory as a confirmatory test.

Order number: 3601650
Order name: LEAD
CPT code: 83655
LOINC code: 5671-3

Reference ranges: 0-18yrs <5.0 µg/dL
>18yrs <10.0 µg/dL

If you have questions or concerns, please feel free to contact either Dr. William Fitter at 918-744-2553, wfitter@sjmc.org, or Mary Pille at 918-744-2555, ext 15788, Mary.Pille@sjmc.org.