



An Affiliate of Methodist Health System

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Bulletin Technical

NEW TUMOR MARKER ASSAYS

The Pathology Center is pleased to announce new immunoassay instrumentation in the laboratory, which will result in improved technology, the potential for test menu expansion, and ultimately, a faster turn-around time. As part of this change, on Wednesday, March 6, 2002, a transition to new assays will occur for tumor markers: Carcinoembryonic Antigen (CEA), Prostate Specific Antigen (PSA), Alpha Fetoprotein (AFP), CA-125, and beta Human Chorionic Gonadotropin (beta hCG).

The measured value for a given tumor marker can vary depending on the testing assay used. Tumor marker values obtained by different assay methods for an individual patient cannot be directly compared with one another and could be the cause of erroneous medical interpretations.

For approximately the next two weeks, each patient for whom a tumor marker assay is ordered will have their specimen split and run in parallel using both the previous method and the new method. The value obtained using the new assay will be reported, and the value obtained using the previous method will be included as a result comment.

Ideally, patients for whom serial tumor marker measurements are important in therapy management should be tested again during the next two weeks. Appropriate patient specimens may be collected in the clinic, Methodist Cancer Center, or The Pathology Center at Methodist Hospital. After approximately March 22, 2002, The Pathology Center will no longer be able to perform parallel tumor marker testing.

Please call Dr. Stacey McManigal or Dr. Thomas Williams at (402)-354-4540 if you have any questions.