

**New PCR Test for Group A Streptococci
In Pharyngeal Specimens for Outreach**

Effective June 7, 2021, Laboratory Alliance of CNY’s microbiology department will be implementing the use of a new PCR assay that detects the nucleic acids of group A streptococci (GAS), also known as *Streptococcus pyogenes*, directly in pharyngeal specimens. This PCR test will be replacing our previously used gene amplification assay for GAS in pharyngeal specimens because it offers an improved service by providing shorter turn-around-times. Because of the near 100% sensitivity of the new PCR assay, pharyngeal specimens with negative test results need not be reflexed for additional testing. Importantly, pharyngeal specimens for GAS PCR testing must be collected and submitted to the microbiology laboratory using the red-capped swab collection/transport system containing liquid Stuart’s transport medium. These red-capped specimen collectors can be obtained by contacting Laboratory Alliance’s Client Services at (315) 461-3008.

Test Name	Group A Strep DNA
Test Code	GASM
Method	Real-time polymerase chain reaction (PCR)
Collect	Throat swab collected using a red-capped swab with liquid Stuart’s transport medium
Storage and Transport	Transport ambient or refrigerated.
Stability	Ambient: 2 days, Refrigerated: 6 days
Unacceptable Conditions	Collectors using gel transport media or dry swabs
Schedule	Daily
CPT Code	87651
Billing Code	3010454
Reference Range	Negative for GAS DNA by PCR



Please contact Russell Rawling, Microbiology Manager at (315) 410-7060, russellrawling@lacny.com or Dr. Paul Granato, Director of Microbiology at (315) 410-7036, paulgranatophd@lacny.com, if you have any questions about this change and new test service.