PURPOSE

The laboratory staff is responsible for accurate and efficient performance of laboratory testing. Guidelines for test turnaround times assist the hospital staff in scheduling and ordering. All times listed may vary because of shift and volume of concurrent testing. Turnaround times listed are from time of receipt in laboratory to time of certification of results by the technologist.

PROCEDURE

STAT TURNAROUND TIMES

1. Most common laboratory tests can be completed in one hour if ordered STAT.
2. Some high-risk panels STAT turnaround times are:

Basic Metabolic Profile: 30 minutes.

Electrolytes: 30 minutes.

Hellp: 60 minutes.

Hemogram: 20 minutes.

Urinalysis: 30 minutes.

1. Crossmatch: 50 minutes.
2. Urine drug screen: 30 minutes.

ASAP TURNAROUND TIMES

1. Most common tests will be completed in two hours.

A.M. DRAW TURNAROUND TIMES

1. Tests ordered for a.m. draws will be drawn between 0500 and 0615.
2. Results from a.m. testing will be available by 0700 the same day for most routine testing.

ROUTINE TURNAROUND TIMES

1. Most laboratory tests are completed within four hours of drawing. Exceptions are the following:
2. Microbiology cultures and sensitivity final results are usually reported 48 to 72 hours after the culture is plated. Preliminary and interim reports are available daily.
3. Blood culture reports are final in five days.
4. Ova and parasite procedures are usually reported 72 hours after receipt of the specimen.
5. Those tests requiring pathologist review are usually reviewed within 24 hours.
6. Tests sent to other laboratories. Turnaround times vary with the test.
7. Some tests are done in batches. These tests may be ordered STAT if necessary.
8. C. difficile tests are done daily about 0900. Results are usually available by 1200.
9. Rubella and RPRs are done daily between 2300 and 0700.
10. RSV slide tests are done when ordered.
11. RSV fluorescent antibodies are done at 0700, 1400, and 2000.

DELAYED TESTING

1. In the event that testing will be delayed less than 60 minutes:
   1. Notify the Emergency Department of the expected delay(s).
   2. Notify any unit or physician ordering that test(s) during this time.
2. In the event that testing is expected to be delayed more than 60 minutes:
   1. Notify the supervisor on call.
   2. Complete a “Laboratory Delay Bulletin” form (see Guidelines of Practice #GENL 10.4 Laboratory Delay Bulletin”) and deliver to each nursing station.

RELATED DOCUMENTS N/A

REFERENCES Guidelines of Practice # NGENL 10.4 “Laboratory Delay Bulletin”