The Pathology Laboratory
830 West Bayou Pines Dr.
Lake Charles, LA 70601
(337) 436-9557 Fax (337) 312-1311
www.thepathlab.com

November 22, 2021

To: All Clients

Re: Rejection of Anaerobic Culture

The Path Lab has been receiving anaerobic culture orders on specimens that are not suitable for anaerobic culture. To reduce unnecessary testing, we will begin rejecting specimens that are not appropriate for anaerobic culture testing beginning January 1, 2022.

The information provided below is to help guide you on appropriate specimen collection for anaerobic culture and identification.

Proper specimen collection:
Anaerobic culture samples must be collected properly to avoid contamination, which occurs with indigenous anaerobic flora from the skin and mucous membranes thus producing misleading results. An anaerobic culture sample is best collected by tissue biopsy or aspiration using a needle or syringe to prevent contamination with normal microbiota flora.

Unsuitable specimens to be rejected:
Because of resident anaerobic flora, specimens from the following collection sites are inappropriate for anaerobic culture and will be rejected:

- Throat and nasopharynx
- Expectorated sputum
- Bronchoscopy specimens
- Gastrointestinal contents
- Voided or catheterized urine
- Urogenital swabs including vaginal and/or cervical
- Superficial wound specimens

Anaerobic organism identification:
Full identification of anaerobic organisms will only occur if the organism is isolated in pure culture or with a limited number of additional potential pathogens. If *Propionibacterium acnes* or *Actinomyces* species are suspected, please submit a request to the laboratory to hold cultures for an extended period of time.

If you have any questions, please contact Sarah Goos, Microbiology Supervisor at sgoos@thepathlab.com or call 337.312.1287.