

Important notice: Alteration to testing for antibodies to dsDNA

A UK company supplies SydPath and many other Australian laboratories with kits, which include radioactively labeled DNA, to measure antibodies to dsDNA by the Farr assay. The supplier has informed us that due to manufacturing issues they are currently unable to supply kits, but anticipate being able to resume supply in March 2017.

As a temporary measure, from 19/01/2017 SydPath will be measuring antibodies to dsDNA using an ELISA assay. The Farr assay is used by many laboratories and is considered the gold standard. Results from ELISA assays do not correlate well with Farr assay results. Whilst results are different, they are not necessarily worse but may simply reflect different sensitivity levels. When trialing these kits in the past, we and others have found that both positive and negative ELISA results of antibodies to dsDNA may vary from previous Farr assay results.

The change to an ELISA method brings a change to the reference range for the test. The new range is as follows;

Positive ≥ 100 IU/ml

Negative < 100 IU/ml

Because there is one major supplier of the Farr assay kits to Australian labs, another Pathology Provider is very unlikely to be able to test antibodies to dsDNA using the Farr assay. If it is particularly important, we can retest a specific patient's sample using the Farr assay, once supply resumes hopefully in March 2017. If you would like a sample also specifically tested by the Farr method, or require further information, please contact the Immunology laboratory on (02) 8382 9169.

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