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**Key Messages:**

- A multi-drug resistant Neisseria gonorrhoeae strain is circulating in Ontario. Providers are recommended to collect both culture and NAAT for patients with suspected N. gonorrhoeae.
- New Ontario Guidelines for Providers Offering HIV Testing have been released. Advances in HIV testing technology have reduced window periods in laboratory-based testing.

**NEW: Multi-drug Resistant Neisseria gonorrhoeae**

On April 3, 2023, the Chief Medical Officer of Health of Ontario issued a memorandum to alert health care providers regarding ceftriaxone non-susceptible N. gonorrhoeae. Recent international reports, including from Europe and the USA, have identified a multidrug-resistant strain of N. gonorrhoeae.

An Ontario patient with no known travel history was recently identified as having a gonorrhea infection with a similar resistance pattern, i.e., reduced susceptibility to ceftriaxone and cefixime, as well as resistance to ciprofloxacin, penicillin, and tetracycline, suggesting circulation of this multi-drug resistant strain within Ontario.

**Testing Recommendations**

For all patients with suspected N. gonorrhoeae infection:

- Collect swabs for culture as well as specimens for NAAT testing from all potentially exposed sites (e.g., urethral/cervical, pharyngeal, rectal). Both types of specimens are recommended as NAAT is more sensitive and culture allows assessment for drug sensitivity.
- Perform a test of cure for all positive cases of N. gonorrhoeae at all positive sites. Culture is the preferred method and should be performed 3-7

days after completion of treatment. If culture is not available, NAAT can be performed 2-3 weeks post-treatment.

Report any patients with multi-drug resistant gonorrhea infection to Peel Public Health to assist in treatment and contact notification. Reports can be made by calling 905-799-7700.

**NEW: Ontario Guidelines for Providers Offering HIV Testing (2023)**

The new <https://hivtestingontario.ca/ontario-guidelines-for-providers-offering-hiv-testing/> were developed to help reach the undiagnosed and as a step forward towards the elimination of new HIV infections in Ontario. The guidelines recommend:

- Streamlined testing and counselling for people at risk of HIV infection.
- Stronger focus on symptoms of both acute and chronic HIV, which are often missed in routine care.
- Routine testing of high-risk populations at risk of HIV infection.
- Equitable access to prevention strategies (e.g., HIV Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis).
- Culturally sensitive services to reduce stigma.

The guidelines also highlight recent advances in HIV testing technology, i.e., reduced window period for definitive diagnosis of HIV from three months to six weeks for laboratory-based testing.

**More information:**

- HIV Testing in Ontario  
<https://hivtestingontario.ca/>
- PHO  
<https://www.publichealthontario.ca/en/diseases-and-conditions/infectious-diseases/sexually-transmitted-infections/hiv-aids>